GHALIB

A CRITICAL APPRECIATION OF HIS LIFE & URDU POETRY

BY

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PREFACE

While introducing this little volume to the literary public, a word of personal explanation seems necessary.

Ever since the publication of my articles on Ghalib in the Indian Press incorporated here as Chapters I, IV and V, there has been a certain amount of excitement in Urdu literary circles. Some there are who think that I am raising a deserved protest against superstition and intemperate adulation. But there are others who, I understand, are strongly displeased with me in the belief that my object in writing this monograph is to condemn or belittle wilfully what they have regarded as one of the world's greatest poets. This class of people have judged me before reading my entire work and examining my main conclusions! A few of these, I am told, even question my title to speak of Ghalib as I am, in their opinion, not born to Urdu but to a mere dialect of it, the uncultivated Dakhani of South India. Those who thus question my title, I know, quote freely in their compositions extract after extract from Lyall and Grierson in support of this or that connected with the Urdu Language or literature and feel profoundly honoured, although I am positively certain that neither Lyall nor Grierson will, even as a matter of courtesy, avow that he is born at least to the dialect to which I am born.

Urdu literary criticism is now-a-days hawked by critics such as these, by those who would make the world believe that besides the sacred Vedas, India

possesses but one inspired book, viz., the Diwan of Ghalib. Since the days which gave birth to that song of banter beginning

چین و عرب ہمارا ہندوستاں ہمارا
مسلم ہیں ہم وطن ہے سارا جہاں ہمارا

this fraternity of fanatics have multiplied and vitiated the sense of perspective in literary judgment. Obsessed as they are with their insularity, they do not realize that Urdu literature is still in its adolescence. It is on its transitional march towards what may be called manhood. From adolescense to manhood, from manhood to maturity is a long way off. Ghazal writers like Ghalib stalking, however gloriously or pompously, on the conventional ground, will come and go. But a Ghalib can never be the last word in Urdu poetry. We have yet to give birth to poets of far higher stature, to 'helpers and benefactors of mankind' who will let the sense of harmony in life which I have so much insisted upon in Chapter VI and which all great poetry offers and must offer, dwell in our midst and make the mind of man a 'mansion for all lovely forms.'

This is a literary need which this little volume has tried humbly to emphasize. May it only make my people reflect!

> I do not want to see the distant scene.
> One step enough for me.

I have heard people saying, "Why judge Eastern poetry by Western standards?" Have I really followed

any extra-territorial standards in my appreciation of Ghalib? Are there any such standards? Life, human life, is essentually the same all the world over. Its expression varies from man to man, from woman to woman, because as the soul, so its expression, especially in lyrical poetry. And it is the soul of man or woman that serves as the background to his or her feelings or moods. Discard the outward garb, the parochial diction and convention---and it is here that the laws of diction peculiar to each language come in---and you will find the soul that has struggled for expression. The soul of a man or of a woman comes from a Common Source, and to the measure of the light vouchsafed to it, it shines. It is this measure that determines the place one should occupy in the domain of artistic expression, whether one belongs to the East or to the West.

I have to mention that in writing Chapter III dealing with the chronological arrangement of the Ghazals of Ghalib I have derived much help from the MS. Diwan *1 of Ghalib dated 1237 A. H. or 1821 A. D., very generously lent to me by the Government of Bhopal. I take this occasion to express my sense of thankfulness to them as well as to Sir Muhammad Akbar N. Hydari, Finance Minister, H. E. H. the Nizam's Government, through whom the MS. was made available to me here in Hyderabad.

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* 1 This MS. has been of great value to the author in arranging the Diwan of Ghalib in the chronological order and in editing it. The Diwan is now in the press and will be out shortly.

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CORRIGENDA

NOTE---Besides the following, there are a few typographical errors of punctuation which the reader will be easily able to correct for himself.

The first thick vertical line in chart on pp. 32, 33, to be shifted one space to right so as to mark the period 1857---58

Page	Line	Incorrect	Correct
8	last but one	amog	among
9	2	learing	learning
10	footnote	Consolidted	Consolidated
15	9	concernd	concerned
16	16	recognise	recognize
19	1	pen of the man	pen of a man
35	7	souces	sources
42	11	it was why that	that was why
44	8	deny the lines	deny that lines
46	15	judgement	judgment
50	3	suddan	sudden
53	10	he poet forgot	the poet forget
,,	22	recognise	recognize
54	18	divine parden	Divine pardon
,,	20	humilation	humiliation
,,	24	persuit	pursuit
,,	27	unberable	unbearable
58	1	ancesters	ancestors
59	13	These	Those
,,	16	complied	compiled
60	12	tenents	tenets
,,	22	truely	truly
63	20	threw then	threw them
64	23	truely	truly
,,	27	dispells	dispels
65	7	realising	realizing
,,	12	an yellow	a yellow

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

The Urdu Diwan of Ghalib, the Diwan as finally shaped by Ghalib himself, covers eighteen hundred and odd distichs. Apparently it is a meagre output, very meagre indeed if we place it by the side of the quantity of verse produced by the other leading poets. Still, Ghalib is given by the present generation a place which is not willingly accorded to any other Urdu poet.

Since Ghalib died in 1869, various critics have attempted to appraise his contribution to Urdu poetry. Some have worked on merely conventional lines: have either expressed uninformed wonder in words with little intelligible meaning behind them, or lost themselves in verbal disquisitions over the poet's diction and style. None of this class has entered into the spirit of his writings and examined the character of his poetic feeling, thought and imagination. This group of critics has appealed most especially to those whose education has been conducted, more or less, on indigenous lines and whose aesthetic sense has not been touched by the influence of Western literatures. There are, however, others, few in number, who have entered upon their task with larger aims than what have been before the conventional critics. To these belong the late poet Hali, Khwaja Altaf Husayn, and the late Muhammad Adbur Rahman Bijnawari, a Doctor of Philosophy of the

University of Gottingen. Particular mention is made of them for the reason that their contributions are of more serious nature than those of others, and also because the student of Ghalib turns to them sometimes for help and guidance but very often for ready-made opinions.

Hali and Dr. Bijnawri show profound scholarship in their approach to Ghalib, but they fail to draw a comprehensive picture of his mind and art. Dr. Bijnawri's *Mahasin-i-Kalam-i-Ghalib* appeared several years after Hali's *Yadgar-i-Ghalib.* His acquaintance with the literary ideals of the East, as well as, of the West, fitted him probably better than Hali to undertake the appreciation of Ghalib on modern scientific lines. His *Mahasin*, however, too clearly brings it home to the reader that he has allowed his enthusiasm for Ghalib to swamp his judgment. What confidence can a critic inspire in the mind of his reader when he is told in the very first sentence of his contribution, a sentence standing as a paragraph by itself, the staggering opinion that "There are only two inspired books in India: the Sacred Vedas and the Diwan of Ghalib." An *obiter dictum* such as this at once suggests that the critic has no respect for perspective. That is exactly the impression which the reader gathers, as he follows Dr. Bijnawri in his impassioned ramble in the rest of his contribution. Ghalib, whatever he was, was primarily a lyrical poet. If, in order to appreciate the lyrical quality of his utterance, comparison with others was deemed so very essential, the natural procedure was to go to his brother lyrists, and not to conduct his idol to scoff at every figure known to Dr. Bijnawri in European art,

Delhi College 1842 A. D., (7) Imprisonment, 1264 A.H., (8) Court Historian of Bahadur Shah 1266 A. H., (9) Correction of Bahadur Shah's verses, (10) An incident during his visit to Calcutta. (11) Children. (12) Elegy on the death of Arif, (13) Mutiny, (14) Pension from Rampur, (15) Qati-i-Burhan controversy, (16) Ghalib's proficiency in Arabic, Persian, Prosody, Astrology, Tassawuf, History, verse-recitation etc., (17) Good manners, (18) Politeness, (19) Philanthropy, (20) Memory, (21) Aesthetic perception, (22) Beauty of expression, (23) Self-respect, (14) Diet, (25) Love of mangoes, (26) Faith in Islam, (27) Bahadur Shah and the Shia Creed, (28) Meekness, (29) Sound Judgment, (30) Recognition of merit in others, (31) Sense of justice, (32) Art of preface writing, (33) Love of truth, (34) Complaint of public, neglect, (35) Confession of his humility, (35) His dislike for satire, (37) His Domestic affairs, (38) His death.

A treatment, such as this, of the facts of Ghalib's life can hardly produce a cumulative and unified effect on the mind of the reader.

The second part of Hali's dissertation is an examination of Ghalib's poetry. But the treatment is again sectional. A few pages are devoted to illustrate by a few stray lines the characteristics of his poetry which according to Hali are "freshness of themes and of ideas," "novelness of figures," "pleasantry," "mastery in clothing subtle thoughts in words of ordinary significance", and "conventional conceits common to his age". This done, Hali feels at once disinclined to pursue his subject. Says he: "There is scope for a

great deal of further discussion on Ghalib's poetry. But as few have any great interest in such things we close the discussion, and content ourselves with giving a list of such lines of Ghalib as seem striking *at a glance* and explaining their meaning and annotating them." In this very dramatic manner does the most popular of Ghalib's biographers brush aside all the difficulties of the problem. Even in his concluding part which he regards as the "life-essence" of his work, does he hardly care to dwell on the "life-essence" of Ghalib's poetry.

In spite of his laborious task, Hali has not made it possible for his reader to get at the heart and soul of Ghalib. Sectional treatment, cutting him into pieces without even suggesting their inter-relation is not suited to raise before one's mind a clear vision of the genius of Ghalib.

It will be remembered that in his prefatory note to the *Yadgar*, Hali suggested that a leading feature of his dissertation would be the determination of Ghalib's place among the leading poets of Persia by comparing their writings with his. When, however, the problem faces him in its practical bearing, he turns away from his purpose. Says he: "The occasion really demands the comparison of some of the Ghazals of Ghalib with those of all those people on whose Ghazal-writing Ghalib's Ghazal-writing, indeed all his poetry, is based, viz. Naziri, Urfi, Zahuri, Talib, and others. Space, however, does not allow this. (The Yadgar runs into 391 pages).* [1]. Besides few can appreciate the results of such investiga-

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* 1. "Yadgar-i-Ghalib" Karimi Press, Lahore, P. 242.

tions, I shall, therefore, take only two of Ghalib's Ghazals, and compare them with those of Naziri, and Zahuri, particularly because the Diwans of the two poets are at this moment before me. There is a well-known Ghazal of Naziri rhyming 'pa Khuftast' and 'bala Khuftast.' Ghalib has modelled a Ghazal on that. Naziri's has 9 distichs, one of which cannot be deciphered. Ghalib's has 12. Hence only 8 of his will be selected, so that a *proper* comparison may be made"!

Ghalib's poetic genius is to be appraised here on the merits of 8 distichs composed not in response to the call of any subjective poetic experience, but as a matter of intellectual, imitative, experimental exercise! The strangest part of this comparison is that few of the distichs compared agree in theme with their corresponding distichs. They have nothing in common except the metre and the rhyme order.

Another serious drawback in the methods of both Hali and Bijnawri is that they have on the strength of a line here or a line there jumped to the conclusion that Ghalib was a philosopher, astronomer, preacher, lover and so forth. This tendency is no less noticeable in one other critic, Dr. Sayyid Mahmud, Ph. D., Bar-at-Law, of Patna who in his preface to the Badayuni edition of Ghalib's Urdu Diwan makes the poet the Apostle of Indian nationalism!

Valuations such as these, have created a wrong taste for literature amog the Urdu-knowing public. It is a matter for deep regret that this taste is fostered, not

in the ante-diluvian circles, so much as in our present-day seats of learing, where research in the field of Urdu literature is neglected and where the teacher and the taught live mostly on what others, such as Hali and Bijnawri, have thought for them. Even when attempt is made in our Universities to form a fresh estimation of Ghalib, our *Savants* go to him not for the sake of his poety but to add, if possible, as many additional heads to his trunk as they can invent for him.

The craze for Ghalib is so much on the increase, that in the interests of Urdu literature it is necessary that an attempt should be made by scholars, in collaboration if possible, to appraise the quality of his mind and art on sound and scientific lines.

The task however is fraught with great difficulties. There is no systematic account of Ghalib's life in existence. His letters which have supplied almost all the available material about the facts of his life are not chronologically arranged in any edition, although they are the subject of study in the Indian Universities in their highest classes. A good many of them bear no dates at all. The Diwan itself originally compiled out of his poems by Ghalib himself does not suggest when and in what circumstances each Ghazal was composed. To study Ghalib under such conditions becomes exceedingly difficult. Still, if proper judgment is exercised, it may not be altogether impossible to recreate Ghalib for the present generation.

CHAPTER II.

MATERIALS : COLLECTION.

The primary task before the student of Ghalib is to collect his materials. Materials usually are of two kinds—'Sources' and 'Guides'. The sources are either 'Absolute' and 'Definite', such as the works of the writer, or 'Relative' which throw light on the significance of the works under consideration, such as contemporary and subsequent notices and oral tradition. The 'Guides' also are of two kinds. One class of 'Guides' are the histories of the several forms of literature in which the writer has very often expressed himself, and of the national culture of the writer under the influence of which he has let himself grow. The other class of 'Guides' suggest methods of approach, such as the history of Aesthetics and the principles of literary criticism that have obtained from age to age among the different nations with aptitude for literary expression.

POETRY.

What are the materials available to us for the study of Ghalib ? There is, in the first instance, the Diwan selected by the poet himself out of his original Diwan, and published in his life-time. Where the original Diwan exists, or when the selection was made, is not ascertainable. Ghalib never had a copy of his own of the full quota of his poems* [1]. But, it appears, one of his friends, Nawab Ziauddin Khan, used to collect his

* 1. Consolidted "Urdu-i-Mu'alla," Lahore, p. 282.

poems as they were composed from time to time* [1]. It also appears that a prince of the Court of Delhi had a copy made out of this collection. It may, therefore, seem probable that when Ghalib felt the need for selection, he must have consulted either of the two MSS. Where these MSS. exist, if at all, is difficult to know. If we believe Ghalib, they were lost in the conflagration of the Indian Mutiny* [2]. It is also not possible to know where the first copy of the selection exists. But this is certain that a copy of this selection was specially prepared by Ghalib in 1855 for Nawab Yusuf Ali Khan of Rampur; and it is not improbable that that might be the first copy itself. Ghalib had with him evidently no copy of his own of this selection, for, when after the Mutiny, a friend of his, Mumtaz Ali, wished to have the abridged Diwan printed by one Azim-ud-din, Ghalib had to make out a copy for him from a certain MS. with Ziauddin which, in view of the loss in the Mutiny of his original collection, might be a reproduction of the same Rampur MS.* [3]. Whether Azim-ud-din published the Diwan is not clear from available records. But it is certain that the Ahmadiyya, Press, Delhi, issued in 1861 an edition of it* [4]. and it is quite probable that when this copy was in the press, Ghalib corrected the proofs himself* [5]. This seems to be the earliest publication of

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*1. Consolidated "Urdu-i-Mu'alla," Karimi Press, Lahore p. 269.

*2. Ibid p. 269.

*3. Ibid p. 282.

*4. "Diwan-i-Ghalib," Nizami Press, Badayun 1923. Preface to the second edition.

*5. Ibid.

the abridged version of Ghalib's Diwan. The various editions which have appeared ever since are all mere reproductions.

So then, it is the Rampur MS. that the student will have to accept as the authorised final version of Ghalib's Urdu poetry. This abridged Diwan is at best a challenge to judge him by what he considered his best productions. But the student of Ghalib must know what Ghalib has dropped from the original Diwan; for, it is only then that he can take a comprehensive view of his poetry.

To ascertain this, the main source on which the student will have to fall back is the Bhopal MS. which was transcribed for Fowjdar Muhammad Khan of the ruling family of Bhopal in 1237 A.H. (1821 A.D.) when Ghalib was only 24 years. The MS. is preserved in the Hamidiyya Library of Bhopal. A copy of this was recently published from Agra with the late Dr. Abdur Rahman Bijnawri's *Mahasin-i-Kalam-i-Ghalib* as introduction to it*[1]. In addition to reproducing the poems contained in the MS. this publication, known as the *Nuskha-i-Hamidiyya*, gives poems from the printed editions of Ghalib's abridged Diwan not common to the Bhopal MS.

The editor of this consolidated edition contends that the MS. was sent several times to Delhi for the inclusion of the poems of the poet produced after 1821

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*1. The publication bears no date.

and that such additional poems are noted on the margin of the MS.*[1]. The Editor suggests that these additions must have, from the nature of the hand-writing, been made in Ghalib's own hand*[2]. The student desirous of working with this MS. will naturally verify these statements by personal examination of the MS. as the present writer has done. (Vide appendix I of the chronologically arranged Diwan for his estimate.) The MS. bears in different places the seal of Fowjdar Muhammad Ghaws Khan, 2·6 cm x 1·8 cm, dated 1248 A.H, or 1832 A.D, and the seal of the very same person of a larger size, 5·8 cm x 4·5, impressed on blank sheets of different texture from that of the original attached apparently at a later date, one in the beginning and one at the end. This seal bears 1261 A.H. or 1844 A.D. But this date may be neglected for reasons set forth in the above mentioned appendix I. We may, therefore, fairly conclude that the Bhopal MS. contains the poems, though not necessarily all, composed by Ghalib till the year 1832*[3].

In order, therefore, to determine what poems or lines from the full quota of Ghalib's Urdu poetry were dropped from time to time before his final selection was

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*1. " Nuskha-i-Hamidiya " p. 5-6.

*2. Ibid p. 6.

*3. Mr. Nizami Badayuni, editor of the Diwan issued from Badayun, states in the preface to the Third Edition that at the time of preparing it, he had in his possession a MS. copy of Ghalib's Diwan which the poet had compiled in 1248 A. H. or 1832. A. D. Attempts to have access to it have proved futile. Mr. Nizami now says it is not to be found any where. This copy, if genuine, will help further classification, of course, if found again. See Appendix I of this monograph for Mr. Nizami's own statement.

made for his authorised Version, the student should first compare the Bhopal manuscript with that of Rampur. Should he find that some of the poems written before 1821 and which are in the body of the *Text* of the Bhopal MS., have no place in the Rampur MS. of 1855, he should group them together as the poems which Ghalib discarded in his mature years as being unworthy of him. They may suggest some of the peculiarities of diction and style of the poetry of his first ten years (1811-1821) which he later on either dropped or modifed.

The next group of poems which should be compared with the Rampur MS. are those written between 1821 and 1832, and noted on the margin of the Bhopal MS. Such poems of this period as are omitted in the Rampur MS. will form the next group of poems which did not find favour with the poet in his later years.

The poems of the Rampur MS. which are not common to the Bhopal MS. should practically be assigned to the period 1832-1855. What poems of this period were discarded when the Rampur MS. was prepared is not possible to know, as a copy of the original Diwan does not exist. Indeed, as this was the period of Ghalib's maturity, few poems might have been written which deserved to be rejected when the final selection was made.

This classification of Ghalib's poems into those discarded and into those retained finally, is very necessary, if the student is anxious to undertake a comprehensive investigation into his poetry, and not content himself,

as Hali and Bijnawri do, with judging the poet by what they considered his very best. It is quite probable that a few poems, not to be found in any of the MSS. mentioned above, do still exist, but have not all been brought to light. Such poems if made available, will complete the 'Absolute' sources needed for the study of Ghalib's Urdu Poetry.

PROSE.

Ghalib's prose in Urdu, with which alone we are immediately concernd, consists chiefly of letters written to his friends. But the student of Ghalib should not neglect his prose works in Persian, including his letters in that language as they may throw light on the character of his intellectual equipment and also on the facts of his life.

The first serious collection was issued in the year of the poet's death and designated by the publishers as 'Urdu-i-Mu 'alla"* 1. There are several editions of this, each new edition bringing to light letters not included in the earlier editions. The largest collection was issued from Lahore in 1926* 2.

The letters of Ghalib furnish a considerable portion of biographical material. Ghalib was in the habit of narrating his life-story in his correspondence to his friends, may be at times, with an eye on the public.

* 1. Preface to the "Urdu-i-Mu'alla" by Mir Mahdi Majruh reproduced in the consolidated edition of Ghalib's letters issued from Lahore, 1926. p. 4. Also p. 340.

* 2. Karimi Press, Lahore.

And, as much of this autobiographical matter is very often presented with poetic license, the student will need very great care in sifting the facts of the poet's life and examining their authenticity.

Take, for example, the question of the influence which Mulla Abdus Samad, a scholar of Persia, exerted on Ghalib in his early years. There is Hali's evidence to indicate the character of that influence *[1] In fact Ghalib himself in a certain place acknowledges his obligations to the man *[2]. Still, in his advanced years, the poet disclaimed him by vehemently protesting that he learnt or "received" everything from the Giver of all gifts *[3]. and that his reputed Persian teacher did not exist in flesh and blood, but was a mere figment created and floated in the air for the stupid gaze of ignorant humanity who would not recognise his attainments unless they were assured that he too, like every poor mortal, needed, and had indeed, a teacher born of a woman. Says he;

مجھکو مبداء فیاض کے سوا کسی سے تلمذ نہیں ھے - اور
عبد الصمد ایک فرضی نام ھے - چونکہ مجھکو بے استاد کہتے
تھے - ان کا منہ بند کرنے کو میں نے فرضی استاد گھڑ لیا ھے "-

Attempts at self-esteem may be enjoyed for their poetic vanity if there should be anything poetic about them. In fact expressions such as:-

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*1. "Yadgar-i-Ghalib." Karimi Press, Lahore p. 99.

*2. Ibid, p. 44.

*3. Ibid, p. 13.

گنجینہ معنی کا طلسم اس کو سمجھئے
جو لفظ کہ غالب میرے اشعار میں آوے

ہم سخن فہم ہیں غالب کے طرفدار نہیں
دیکھیں کہدے کوئی اس سہرے سے بڑھکر سہرا

form part of the poetic license in the East and are harmless in their purpose, though the last distich, as the students of Ghalib know, cost him much anxious thought after its utterance. But such expression should not turn into aggressive suppression of truth. When it does, as in the case of Abdus Samad, the duty of the student is plain. He must examine it, not as a poetic utterance, but as an alleged fact of history.

The sources mentioned above are Absolute or Definite. They will raise several problems in the course of the student's investigation which we will indicate in their proper places.

The other sources, apart from those which supply the aesthetic data or social background, 'Relative' in character, have to be traced. A genius, in his attempt to express himself and impress his personality on his age, not infrequently runs counter to the prevailing mood or taste and is very often misunderstood. The student will have to bear this in mind when he examines the contemporary estimates of his friends and enemies.

Of the contemporary literature, which may be classed under 'Relative' sources, is the literature excited by Ghalib's قاطع برهان published in 1276 A. H. 1859 A. D. The scholar will have to determine whether

" قاطع قاطع " " موئد برہان " " محرق قاطع " " ساطع برہان "

mentioned by Hali are the only publications of this kind. Hali suggests that the literature of this controversy was marred by reciprocative vituperation* [1] probably characteristic of the time. This literature, in spite of its stated vulgarity may be helpful in bringing to light the aspects of the poet's mind and character which may not be clearly noticeable in the poet's own writings.

Ghalib counted among his correspondents a large number of friends---Hindus and Muslims. What did he do with their letters? The Courts of Delhi and Lucknow were centres of literary activity. There may be references to Ghalib in the production of contemporary writers of these two places, or in their correspondence to each other. Ghalib's visit to Calcutta was made unpleasant by a controvesy over the poet's literary characteristics * [2]. The literature concerning this may be instructive. Ghalib had a good supply of vilifyin ꞡ anonymous correspondence, especially in consequence of his publication of the *Qati-i-Burhan** [3]. What has happened to that? There must have been obituary notices published in the press at the time of his death. Could they be made available? Ghalib, notwithstanding the attempt made to hail him as the apostle of Indian Nationalism, did care to keep the British authorities in good humour. His several odes to British

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* 1. "Yadgar". Karimi Press, Lahore p. 40.

* 2. "Yadgar". Karimi Press, Lahore. p. 19.

* 3. Ibid p. 47.

representatives in India coming from the pen of the man who had witnessed the tragedy of Delhi and the deportation of his patron, Bahadur Shah, should be suggestive. Can the poet's correspondence with British officials and their replies be traced? These and such like will be additional sources, some 'Absolute', some 'Relative'.

An earnest student will not enter upon the examination of the poetry of Ghalib before he is properly equipped for the task: because scientific enquiry into literary problems of such serious import as the determination of Ghalib's place among the world's poets are not things to trifle with by every literary executant. The least that can be expected of him is to acquaint himself previously with the principles of literary criticism and the cultural history of the people or society of which Ghalib was a member. He should also acquaint himself with the leading characteristics of the writings of those who, according to Hali and Ghalib himself, influenced the poet in his Ghazal-writing e. g. Baydil, Naziri, Urfi, Zahuri, Shaik Ali Hazin, Talib-i-Amili and Mir Taqi. Any bibliography that the student may prepare for this purpose---and this is not a small list---will be his "Guides".

CHAPTER III.

MATERIALS: CHRONOLOGICAL ARRANGEMENT.

The Absolute sources detailed in the previous chapter will need to be arranged chronologically. For, unless that is done, any opinion offered on the development of Ghalib's mind and art, will be a mere hazard.

VERSE.

Men, like Hali, who had the benefit of personal association with the poet, and who were themselves competent scholars, should have ascertained from the poet himself what poems he wrote first, what next, and so on, if he could not have remembered the actual date of each poem. That opportunity is now lost. Hereafter we could never hope to specify the dates of Ghalib's poems. But one thing is still within the possibility of our reach, and that is to classify the entire poetic output in Urdu in groups of progressive order. *1.

The progress of life is dependent on the happenings of each day undoubtedly. But the outstanding tendencies do not change almost every day. If this contention is admissible, the arrangement of Ghalib's poetry into sections denoting periods of life in progressive chronological order should serve the purpose of investigation into the development of the poet's mind

*1. Vide the Diwan of Ghalib as chronologically arranged by the author.

and art. In fact, that is the utmost that can be achieved in the absence of better evidence. What Ghalib thought and did from day to day will certainly be interesting, though tedious to most of his readers: but how his mind grew, from time to time, how it expressed itself from period to period, or from stage to stage is what interests literary criticism.

With this object in view we suggest below a possible method for the chronological classification of his works.

Take his poetry. Ghalib states that he began to write verse when he was about 15 *1. The efforts of his first ten years are recorded in the *text* of the Bhopal MS. of 1237 A. H. or 1821 A. D. when Ghalib was 24. The Bhopal MS. is thus the first starting point.

It will be remembered that between 1821 and 1832 the Ghazals of the poet composed after 1821 were added on the margin of the Bhopal MS. So this MS. contains two groups of poems, one consisting of the poems which form the *text*, the other, of those noted on the margin. The first group of poems belong to the first ten years of Ghalib's literary life, viz: 1811-1821, and the other group to 1822-1832.

The poems not common to the Rampur MS. and which are to be found only in the MS. of Bhopal may be assigned to the period 1833-1855.

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* 1. 'Nuskha-i-Hamidiyya,' p. 14 Cf. The 'Yadgar', Karimi Press, Lahore, 1924, pp. 97-98 for the statements of Hali regarding the age at which Ghalib began to write verse in Urdu.

Of the poems that were written during his last years only a few have come to light* 1. These should be assigned to 1856-1869.

It has already been noticed that several Ghazals and lines belonging to the period 1811-1821 were discarded by Ghalib at the time of his final selection about 1855, when the Rampur MS. was prepared.

Such poems need not necessarily be his very earliest. They may belong to the later years of the period. Even this, one cannot suggest with any possible precision. The utmost that one can say about them, is that they were among the attempts of 1811-1821 which Ghalib discarded later on as being unworthy of him. But one thing we may say with a fair amount of certainty that they embody, according to the taste of Ghalib's, maturer years the weaknesses of the first ten years of his literary activity.

The poems of the first ten years which are retained in the Rampur MS. either express the genuine impulses of his earliest expression or indicate the capacity of Ghalib for intellectual exercises in poetical expression or for writing lines and Ghazals to order. The last two aspects are suggested because a Ghazal writer need not always express his own personal feelings as discussed in the final chapter. In any case, this group should mark the first stage in the development of Ghalib's poetry.

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* 1. Vide Diwan-i-Ghalib as chronologically arranged by the author.

Similar considerations will hold good in respect of the next group of poems which are noted on the margin of the Bhopal MS. and which are assigned to 1821-1832.

To recapitulate,

1. The first instalment of Ghalib's poems are those which form the *text* (1821) of the Bhopal MS.

2. The second instalment should consist of the poems noted on the margin of the Bhopal MS. and which cover 1822-1832.

3. The third instalment will comprise the poems not common to the Bhopal MS. and which are to be found only in the Rampur MS. This should belong to 1833-1855.

4. The fourth instalment will belong to the years 1856-1869. So the several periods in progressive order are :—

1.	1811-1821	... ...	A period of 11 years.
2.	1822-1832	... ...	" " 11 "
3.	1833-1855	... ...	" " 23 "
4.	1856-1869	... ...	" " 14 "

The student desirous of tracing the growth or development of the poet's mind and art will have to study his poems in the following order :—

Poems retained in the Rampur MS. of the period.		Those discarded in the Rampur MS. of the period.
1. 1811-1821	... ...	1811-1821
2. 1822-1832	... ...	1822-1832
3. 1833-1855	... ...	
4. 1856-1869	... ...	

The poems of 1811-1832 which are retained in the Rampur MS. will have to be studied in the light of those poems of the period which are not included in it. The results analysed will form the basis for the study of the poems of maturer years, 1833-1855 and after.

PROSE.

It has already been pointed out that Ghalib's Urdu prose consists almost entirely of letters. Those published* [1] cover the period 1852-1869, although, if we believe Hali* [2], they should cover 1850-1851 also. But none of the letters of these two years is available among those dated. It is, however, quite probable that some of the undated letters belong to the years 1850-1851.

These letters will afford considerable help in the determination or elucidation of several biographical details of Ghalib's life.

To facilitate the work of the student, a chart is given at the end of the chapter showing the names of those to whom he wrote, the period of correspondence with them and the number of letters he addressed to each. It is unnecessary to point out that these letters may not be all that he would have written to his correspondents mentioned in the chart, nor again could it be suggested that these were the only persons to whom he ever wrote.

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* 1. The consolidated Urdu-i-Mu'alla, Karimi Press, Lahore 1926.

* 2. Yadgar p. 129, Lucknow Edition.

An examination of the chart will show that Ghalib's published letters can be grouped under the following well defined periods:-

1.	1852-1856	...	...	5 years.
2.	1857-1858	...	...	2 years.
3.	1859-1863	...	...	5 years.
4.	1864-1869	...	...	6 years.

It should be noticed that the predominant majority of Ghalib's letters give his name or signature at the end of each letter. But some do not. The student of Ghalib should make the necessary enquiry about the authenticity of the letters which belong to the second category.

The period 1852-1856 covers the five years which immediately preceded the Mutiny. Very few letters belong to these years. From their nature it would appear that the years were rather uneventful in the life of the poet. The only event which looms large during this period is the appointment of the poet as Court Historian of Bahadur Shah, and the writing of مہر نیمروز. The next period 1857-1858 was one of disturbance in his life. The Mutiny brought its repercussion, and Ghalib was one of its victims. The letters relating to the suspension of his pension and Khala'at and allied incidents belong to this period.

The letters expressive of joy and delight at the restoration of his pension and Khala'at, the letters connected with the publication of his Urdu Diwan and his Kulliat-i-Urdu, and the letters of thanks for financial

assistance rendered to him by friends and admirers, including pensions from Rampur and Alwar, group themselves under 1859-1863, a period of comparative material comfort.

The period 1864-1869 closing with the death of the poet were years of prolonged ill-health and physical suffering. The letters which relate to these closing years form the last group.

The student attempting the chronological arrangement of Ghalib's letters in the order suggested above will have no difficulty in assorting the letters which bear dates. His difficulty will arise when he deals with the undated letters. Some bear only the day and the month: some do not contain even this. How are they to be classified under the different periods?

The only guidance in such cases should be internal evidence.

The undated letters of Ghalib either refer to certain facts of his life which may be categoricaliy assigned to one or the other of the several periods specified above, or speak of trifling affairs which may happen at any stage in the life of every man or woman.

Of the latter category are the following two specimens:--

کیوں صاحب ہم سے خفا ہوگئے کہ ملنا بھی چھوڑا - خیر
میری تقصیر معاف کرو اور اگر ایسا ہی گناہ عظیم ہے کہ کبھی

نہ بخشا جائیگا تو وہ گناہ مجھپر ثابت کردو ۔ تاکہ میں اپنے
تصور پر اطلاع پاؤں ۔ برخوردار پیارے سنگھ تمہارے پاس
پہنچتا ہے اور یہ تمہارا دست گرفتہ ہے ۔ زعنک میں تم نے
اسے نوکر رکھوا دیا تھا ۔ خیر وہاں کی صورت بگڑ گئی ۔ اب
یہ غریب بہت تباہ ہے اور امور معاش میں سخت دل تنگ ۔
تمہیں دستگیری کرو تو یہ سنبھلے ورنہ اسکا نقش ہستی
صفحہ دہر سے مٹ جائیگا ۔ والسلام ؟ ۔ عنایت کا طالب غالب

بندہ پرور ۔ آپکا خط لکھنو سے آیا ۔ حالات معلوم ہوئے
یہ نہ معلوم ہوا کہ کیا کام آپکے سپرد ہوا ہے یہ بھی لکھئے ۔ چند
روز صبر کرو گر وطن میں ہوتے تو اس بیکاری میں گھر کی
خبر کیا لیتے ۔ جس طرح جب گزرتی ہے اب بھی گزر جائیگی
بلکہ تمہارا خرچ کم ہو گیا ۔ بہرحال ابھی اضافہ کیواسطے نہ
تم کہو نہ میں لکھوں دو چار مہینے کام کرو اس میں اگر بلگرام
میں چھاپہ خانہ جاری ہو گیا تو استعفا دیکر چلے جاؤ ۔
یہاں بعد چند روز کے اضافہ ہونا بھی تو خیر امکان سے باہر
نہیں ۔

Such letters have no biographical significance: and they are very few. They may at best throw light on Ghalib's style in prose.

The other group of the undated letters can, from the nature of the internal evidence, be grouped under one or the other of the periods suggested above.

Take for example, a letter dated May 3, 1860 which deals with the subject of the publication of the poet's Diwan, and which is addressed to Shive Narayan*1. The following is an extract from it.

بھائی مصطفی خانصاحب کے ہاں اترا۔ وہاں منشی
ممتاز علی صاحب میرے دوست قدیم مجھ کو ملے - انہوں
نے کہا کہ اپنا اردو کا دیوان مجھکو بھیجدیجئے گا - عظیم الدین
ایک کتاب فروش اس کو چھاپا چاہتا ھے ....
مجھے یہی کہتے بن آئی کہ اچھا دیوان تو میں ضیاء الدین
خاں سے لیکر بھیج دونگا مگر کاپی کی تصحیح کا ذمہ کون کرتا ھے
نواب مصطفی خاں نے کہا کہ میں - اب کہو کہ میں کیا کرتا -
دلی آکر ضیاء الدین خان سے دیوان لیکر ایک آدمی کے ہاتھ
نواب مصطفی خاں کے پاس بھیجدیا -

The following is an extract from an undated letter addressed to Yusuf Mirza*2.

میرا اردو کا دیوان میرٹھ کو گیا - سکندر شاہ لیگئے -
مصطفی خاں دے آئے - ڈاک میں اسکی رسید آ گئی -

The subject of this letter suggests that it belongs to 1860, the date of the letter to Shive Narayan mentioned above. Similarly, the undated letter addressed to Nawab

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* 1. Consolidated Urdu-i-Mu'alla, Lahore 1926, pp. 281-282.

* 2. Ibid p. 247.

Ziauddin Khan of which the following is extracted must belong to the same year*1.

جناب قبلہ و کعبہ آپ کو دیوان کے دینے میں تامل کیون ھے - روز آپ کے مطالعہ میں نہیں رہتا - بغیر اس کے دیکھے آپکو کھانا ہضم نہ ہوتا یہ بھی نہیں - پھر آپ کیون نہیں دیتے - ایک جلد ہزار جلد بن جائے - میرا کلام شہرت پائے - میرا دل خوش ھو - تمھارے تعریف کا قصیدہ اہل عالم دیکھیں - تمھارے بھائی کی تعریف کی اثر سب کی نظر سے گزرے - اتنے فواید کیا تھوڑے ھیں - رھا کتاب کے تلف ھونے کا اندیشہ یہہ خفقان ھے - کتاب کیون تلف ھوگی - احیاناً اگر ایسا ھوا اور دلی لکھنو کی عرض راہ مین ڈاک لٹ گئی تو میں فوراً سبیل ڈاک رامپور جاونگا اور نواب فخرالدین خاں مرحوم کے ھاتھہ کا لکھا ھوا دیوان تم کو لادونگا -

Take another illustration, an extract from a letter*2 addressed to Yusuf Mirza, which is undated:--

حکام صدر ایسے باتون پر نظر نہ کرینگے - میں نے سکہ کہا نہیں - اگر کہا تو اپنی جان اور حرمت بچانے کو کہا - یہ گناہ نہیں اور اگر گناہ بھی ھے تو کیا ایسا سنگین ھے کہ ملکۂ معظمہ کا اشتہار بھی اسکو نہ مٹاسکے - سبحان اللہ گولہ انداز کا بارود

* 1. Consolidated Urdu-i-Mu'alla pp. 215-216.

* 2. Ibid p. 249.

بنانا اور توپین لگانی اور بنک گھر اور میگزین کا لوٹنا معاف ہوجائے اور شاعر کے دو مصرعے معاف نہ ہون

The contents of the letter suggest that the letter must have been written in the year of the general amnesty proclaimed in 1858 through what is called the "Magna Charta of India".

By pursuing this method, guided by internal evidence, the several undated letters which refer to one or the other of the established facts of Ghalib's life, can be grouped under the several periods specified in the chart attached herewith.

URDU LETTERS OF GHALIB.

Serial Number.	Name of Addressee.	1850	1851	1852	1853	1854	1855	1856	1857	1858	1859	1860	1861	1862	1863	1864	1865	1866	1867	1868	1869	Dated	Un-dated	Total
		Period of Correspondence.																				Number of letters.		
1	Mir Ghulam Baba ...																					9	1	10
2	Mian Dad Khan ...																					30	5	25
3	Habibulla Khan Zuka ...																					11	4	15
4	Har Gopal, Tafta ...																					74	49	123
5	Shahzada Bashiruddin ...																					2	3	5
6	Faqir Saheb ...																					4	1	5
7	Mir Mahdi Majruh ...																					10	35	45
8	Qazi Abdul Jamil ...																					3	9	12
9	Ghulam Najaf Khan ...																					8	15	23
10	Mir Ibrahim Ali Khan, Wafa ...																					5		5
11	Sayyid Ahmad Husayn ...																					10	1	11
12	Munshi Nabi Baksh ...																					2		2
13	Khwaja Ghulam Ghaws Khan...																					4	10	14
14	Mirza Shihabuddin Khan ...																					3	4	7
15	Miran Sahib ...																					3		3
16	Shive Narayan ...																					29	4	33
17	Amiruddin Khan of Loharu ...																					4	2	6
18	Mirza Ali Alauddin Khan ...																					28	25	53
19	Piaray Lal ...																					2	2	4
20	Sayyid Ghulam Hasnayn ...																					6	15	21
21	Chawdri Abdul Ghafur ...											*										1	16	17
22	Shah Alam ...											*										1	1	2
23	Zahiruddin Ahmad Khan ...																*					1		1
24	Ahmad Husayn ...											*										1	1	2
25	Munshi Abdul Latif ...									*												1		1
26	Mirza Baqir Ali Khan ...																					2	1	3
27	Husayn Mirza ...										*								*			2	2	4
28	Yusuf Mirza ...										*											2	9	11

No.	Name																							
29	Ghulam Murtuza Khan ...																*					1		1
30	Munshi Hira Singh ...																		*			1	1	2
31	Munshi Behari Lal ...																		*			2		2
32	Sayyid Sajjad Mirza ...																*					1	1	2
33	Munshi Jawahar Singh ...																*					2	1	3
34	Mir Sarfaraz Husayn Khan ...																						2	2
35	Sahib Alam ...																						2	2
36	Abdul Ghafur Khan ...																						1	1
37	Mirza Yusuf Ali Khan ...																						1	1
38	Mardan Ali ...																						2	2
39	Abdur Razzaq, Shakir ...																						2	2
40	Azizuddin ...																						1	1
41	Sayyid Muhammad Abbas ...																						1	1
42	Tafazzul Husayn Khan ...																						1	1
43	Mirza Hatim Ali ...																						18	18
44	Ziauddin Khan ...																						1	1
45	Farrukh Mirza ...																						1	1
46	Mir Ahmad Husayn ...																						2	2
47	Anwarud Dawlah ...																						18	18
48	Mirza Qurban Ali Baig ...																						2	2
49	Munshi Kevalram ...																						1	1
50	Karamat Ali ...																						1	1
51	Mirza Shamshad Ali ...																						2	2
52	Har Govind Sahai ...									*												1	1	2
53	Ghulam Riza Khan ...																						1	1
	Total ...																					266	280	546

CHAPTER IV.

PROBLEMS OF THE STUDY OF GHALIB.

BIOGRAPHY.

The study of a poet may be confined to his works, or it may include his biography also. As the biographical background may probably be found useful even in the exclusive consideration of his works, we should think it desirable, especially in the case of our poet, that the student should not only attempt to build up his biography, but relate its details, wherever necessary or possible, to his poetical expression.

There is, however, this to be borne in mind that the biography of a poet will naturally need a different treatment from the biography of---say, a politician, or a king. It will certainly be interesting to know when the poet was born, to whom he was born, how he spent his youth, adolescence, manhood and so forth, and what events happened to him at the different stages in his life. Such details need always to be mentioned when writing a systematic biography of anybody. But in the case of a poet one will be interested to know something more,---the meaning behind the several details, and how and in what way each event in his life affected the growth or development of his mind.

What material is there at hand which we may employ in writing a systematic account of Ghalib's life? Of the relative sources made available so far, only the *Yadgar-i-Ghalib* of Hali, and a short biographical sketch

in the *Ab-i-Hayat* of Muhammad Husayn Azad seem to be deserving of consideration. The rest, which exist in the form of brief biographical notes attached to several of the editions of the poet's Urdu Diwan, are not of material help to us, as they are more or less based on Hali and Azad. The absolute sources are always of primary importance. But not every one of such souces will be helpful to us. His letters both in Urdu and Persian, his Masnawi written during his imprisonment, and his *Dastanbu*, which is a sort of autobigraphy dealing with the events of his life in the years 1857-1858, are the absolute sources the student will have to consult ultimately for the determination of the biographical details of Ghalib's life. Of these, his letters in Urdu will be found to be the most helpful, as they not only record some of the events which happened to him during the period covered by 1850-1869, but contain, here and there, recollections of his life prior to 1850.

The sources *available*, whether relative or absolute, may not furnish all that one may care to know about the life of Ghalib. They are, however, there for the use of the student. He can draw up with their help at least a rough sketch of the poet's life, true in its salient features, though not complete and comprehensive in its details. The rough sketch that he may draw up will need to be touched and retouched as fresh material comes to light.

In handling the biographical material that is available, the student should remember the caution that we have given in an earlier chapter viz: that he should not take everything merely on trust, whoever the narrator,

whether Ghalib, or Hali, or Azad. The caution is repeated here not because any one of these deliberately misleads his readers, but because none of them seems to have taken sufficient pains to be accurate in his statement. Take a biographical detail for illustration. Ghalib states that he began to write Ghazals in Urdu at the age of 15 or about 1811, and that for the first few years ایک یا دو برس he assumed 'Asad' as his *Takhallus* or pen-name.* 1. But this statement is not borne out by his Urdu Diwan.

Take even the very final group of his poems belonging to his maturer years viz: 1833-1855, and one will not fail to find that several Ghazals of even this period bear the pen-name of 'Asad', as for example those ending.* 2.

چھوڑی اسد نہ ہم نے گدائی میں دل لگی
سائل ہوئے تو عاشق اہل کرم ہوئے
دیکھا اسد کو خلوت و جلوت میں بارہا
دیوانہ گر نہیں ہے تو ہشیار بھی نہیں
ہمارے شعر میں اب صرف دل لگی ہے اسد
کھلا کہ فائدہ عرض ہنر میں خاک نہیں

Mahd. Husayn Azad is similarly at times not very accurate in what he records. In his *Ab-i-Hayat* he states that the poet chose 'Ghalib' as his pen-name in 1245 A. H. or 1828 A. D which, again is not

* 1. 275 p. Consolidated " Urdu-i-Mualla, Lahore 1826.
* 2. Vide the chronologically arranged Diwan-i-Ghalib Hydrabad-Dn. 1928.

borne out by the Urdu Diwan of Ghalib. Besides Azad does not state on what authority he fixed the year 1828 as the date of the adoption of the new *Takhallus.*

Hali also is not a safe guide in the determination of biographical details as already shown in chapter I. His main interest in Ghalib is not in the facts of Ghalib's life: they are arranged helter-skelter. His interest seems to be to impress his readers of the greatness of Ghalib as an amiable personality and as a poet. In his eagerness to create this effect, he forgets that he occasionally indulges in contradictions. Take the case of Mulla Abdus-Samad for a second time. Compare

"مرزا کی چودہ برس کی عمر تھی، جب عبدالصمد انکے مکان پر وارد ہوا ھے - اور دو برس اس نے وھاں قیام کیا - پس جب یہ خیال دیا جاتا ھے کہ مرزا کو کس عمر میں اسکی صحبت میسر آئی اور کسقدر قلیل مدت اسکی صحبت میں گزری تو عبدالصمد اور اسکی تعلیم کا عدم و وجود برابر ہوجاتا ھے اسلئے مرزا کا یہ کہنا غلط نہیں ھے کہ مجھکو مبداء فیاض کے سوا کسی سے تلمذ نہیں ھے اور عبدالصمد ایک فرضی نام ھے"

with

"مرزا کے ابتدائی اشعار دیکھنے سے معلوم ہوتا ھے کہ کچھ تو طبیعت کی مناسبت سے اور زیادہ تر ملا عبدالصمد کی تعلیم کے سبب فارسیت کا رنگ ابتدا ھی میں مرزا کی بول چال اور انکی قوت متخیلہ پر چڑھ گیا تھا -"

It is therefore clear that the student anxious to determine and arrange the authentic biographical material, will have to be always on his guard. He should

take the statements of Hali and Azad for what they are worth, compare them with the facts as narrated by the poet in his works and judge for himself, after mak-making, of course full allowance for the defects of admiration on the one hand, and the claims of poetic license and natural personal vanity on the other.

POETRY

What are the problems of the study of Ghalib's poetry? The question will necessarily argue: "What are the problems which usually concern all poetry?" This again will lead to: "What is poetry? And how is one to determine what that is?"

There are, one may say, theories and definitions of poetry always available for our guidance. But then they are so numerous and so bewildering. Some mistake the poetic faculty for the poetic art: some hardly distinguish poetry from art in general: some limit themselves to the nature of poetry: some to its aim and so orth. What aid can any particular theorist give us in the solution of our question, viz., what problems does the poetry of Ghalib suggest for our consideration? What problems? Shall they be---Does the poetry of Ghalib "expatiate in the inner space and in the inner time of the ideas and feelings"? (Hegel); Is it a "musical thought"? (Carlyle); Is it "synonymous with the language of ideality"? (Rowland Hazard); Is it "a learning so universal that no learned nation doth despise it, nor a barbarous nation is without it"? (Philip Sidney);

"Does it express the glow of emotion, and the thrill of joy"? (P. Shairp); Is it "something divine", "the centre and circumference of knowledge", "the record of the best and happiest moments of the happiest and best minds"? (Shelley); Is it the "breath, the finer spirit of all knowledge---the impassioned expression in the countenance of all science", and does it "produce excitement in co-existence with an over-balance of pleasure"? (Wordsworth); Is it the "presentment in musical form to the imagination of noble grounds for the noble emotions" (Ruskin); Is it "itself a thing of God"? (Bailey); and is it "a composition in verse"? (Whately), and so on, to confine the questionaire to the critics of modern times only.

The student will not have failed to notice that a large majority of these definitions are but vague evaluations. They do not show him the way how to visualize to himself a picture of Ghalib's poetry. He had better, therefore, not entangle himself in the labyrinth of theories and definitions. Let him instead put to himself a few simple questions and see how they work.

We talk of the poem of this or that poet. What do we mean by that? What does it signigy to us? A poem, few will deny, is an instrument by which the poet endeavours to communicate to others what he himself has experienced in his mind. It embodies his inward experience in a manner at once helpful in the equal possession of it by others. Let us see what stages this effort of the poet reveals? We have just stated that a poem is an instrument of communication. And what does this instrument consist of? It consists of words which we

call *poetic diction*, and consists of a method of arranging these words in such order and with such artifice that they cumulatively produce a sense of finality or unity or harmony in the mind of the reader or the hearer. The method is what is designated as *poetic technique*. The result of the process is what is called the *form* of the poem. What does this form try to convey except what the poet has intended to, viz: his poetic experience?

And how does this poetic experience come about? Something goes home to the poet's mind. It may be an incident in his own life, or in that of others: it may be a thought or suggestion, or recollection. This may be called the 'matter' of the poet. The matter goes home to the poet's mind and is charged with what it excites there or rouses under the stress of his imagination,—moods, feelings, interpretations. In other words, it is rooted in the spirit of his mind, and is so fused with it that it becomes a single and unanalysable complex which, let us call in the language of literary criticism, 'Inspiration'. This inspiration may happen to anybody, but so long as it is not resolved into some definite shape or to use another technical term 'conceived' into a harmonious form, the inward process is incomplete. Even when the process is complete, we cannot say, we have got poetry.

For conception alone is not poetry. Do not we, at least some of us, let something almost every day go home to our minds and generate inspiration therein? And does not such inspiration at times assume a form, self-contained and harmonious? But is that poetry? Are we, then, poets? We shall be certainly poets, if only we

could communicate what we have conceived to others with all that it signifies. But we do not, rather cannot. A poet does, and does so by means of language. The finished poem is the reflexion of his inward conception. The greater the resemblance of the form of the poem to the inward conception, the greater the art, and greater the poet as an artist.

To repeat: a poem begins with a poetic excitement or what we may call the initial impulse. The impulse may be due to anything. This impulse affects the mind of the poet and is rooted in his own spirit, and by rousing in him moods and associations creates a special significance for him, which significance speedily or gradually assumes a form and is transmitted to the world at large by means of language resolved into a poem.

Let us note down progressivly the several stages in this process so as to determine what questions will be pertinent to the discussion of Ghalib's poetry.

In pursuing this process in the Urdu Poetry of Ghalib, the student will have to take into consideration one or two salient peculiarities of Ghazal-writing.

In the first place, a Ghazal is not a poem. It has no unity, no harmony in its inter-related parts, and consequently no organic form of its own. A Ghazal is a string of independent distichs, or line-poems. Occasionally a particular sense may run into more than a distich. But usually each distich stands by itself. The only connection between one distich and another is the sound of the last

word or words, or a common rhyme, which can at best have but a musical value.

A Ghazal writer thus works on a most limited canvas, just a distich. A flash, a clever and dexterous combination of words may cover all the intricacies of his art, the art of Ghazal-writing. Not so the craftsmanship in a 'Masnawi', a 'Qasida', a 'Mussadas', a 'Tarji Band', a 'Qata', or a 'Marsia'. There, the canvas is larger in each case, the emotion and imagination more sustained. Greater art is demanded of the poet in these forms of poetry. Probably, it was why that Ghalib felt once that the best of him was in his Qasidas, by which he probably meant the best of his art, as the best of his poetry is admittedly in his Ghazals.

Another peculiarity of Ghazal-writing, a peculiarity which clogs the free expression of a feeling, however genuine, is the traditional adherence to certain prescribed metres, and to a code of conventional symbols and figures of speech---metres and symbols borrowed of Persian and through Persian of Arabic. At the present day it may be easy enough to discard or violate the convention. But in the time of Ghalib, it was not so easy even for one like him who would, if possible, have run at a tangent to the traditional attitude.

Hence, we find in Ghalib a tacit adherence to convention on the one hand, though sparsely: and a conscious but subdued attempt to run away from it and find out a path of his own, on the other. The latter

aspect of his work will suggest that he could not rise superior to the limitations of the prescribed metre, though at times he could to those of the prescribed diction.

What lines of Ghalib bear the conventional touch will not be difficult to specify. But as conventional phraseology, or diction, may most suitably clothe at times a genuine feeling, the specification of the conventional lines may very often be a conjecture as it would be equally a conjecture to denominate the rest as expressions of real poetic experience felt or enjoyed by the poet. Still, it should not be difficult to mark out at least some lines which from their internal character or from their relation to certain details of the poet's biography bear the stamp of genuineness.

Mr. Lascelles Abercrombie, the poet and critic, in his admirable thought-provoking treatise on the Theory of Poetry* 1 suggests that "A poet's inspiration is not bound up with those secrets of a man's life which his biography hopes to elucidate, with no hopes of success." This may probably be true of the epical or dramatic form of poetry; and even of the creative lyric or lyric of fancy* 2. It cannot wholly be true of the purely subjective. Does not *Rugby Chapel*, in spite of its universal appeal, lay bare the biographical background or take its colour from it? Milton's sonnet on his blindness would not have been the sonnet that it is, so touching and full of pathos, had not the universal been idealised in his own

* 1. London: Martin Secker, 1924.

* 2. See Ch. VI. also.

personal affliction and in all that it signified to him. The same might be said of *Lycidas*, *Scholar Gipsy*, *Thyrsis*, *In Memorium*, *Ulysses* and similar productions. If the poetic utterance is not to be related to the poet's biography whenever possible, we shall lose one of the powerful aids to the determination of those lines of Ghalib which were the expressions of real personal emotion. Who can deny the lines such as those written on the death of Arif,

لازم تھا کہ دیکھو میرا رستہ کوئی دن اور
تنہا گئے کیوں اب رھو تنہا کوئی دن اور
مٹ جائیگا سر گر ترا پتھر نہ گھسیگا
ھوں در پہ تیرے ناصیہ فرسا کوئی دن اور
ائے ھو کل اور آج ھی کہتے ھو کہ جاؤں
مانا کہ ہمیشہ نہیں اچھا کوئی دن اور
جاتے ھوے کہتے ھو قیامت کو ملینگے
کیا خوب! قیامت کا ھے گویا کوئی دن اور
ھاں اے فلک پیر جوان تھا ابھی عارف
کیا تیرا بگڑتا جو نہ مرتا کوئی دن اور
تم کون سے ایسے تھے کھرے داد و ستد کے
کرتا ملک الموت تقاضا کوئی دن اور
مجھ سے تمہیں نفرت سہی، نیر سے لڑائی
بچوں کا بھی دیکھا نہ تماشا کوئی دن اور
گزری نہ بہر حال یہ مدت خوش و ناخوش
کرنا تھا جوانمرگ گزارا کوئی دن اور
نادان ھو، جو کہتے ھو کہ کیوں جیتے ھو غالب
قسمت میں ھے مرنے کی تمنا کوئی دن اور

however universal in their application and appeal, have no biographical significance ? Their very personal character lends strength to their universal appeal.

Let us revert to the poetry of Ghalib and see what questions seem pertinent to a discussion of it.

1. Initial impulse.

What was the world from which Ghalib extracted themes for his poetry ? Some must have belonged to the circle of convention: some to himself. Could the student distinguish and analyse ? What initial impulses or stimuli did they supply in each case ?

2. Inspiration.

How did his themes react on his mind ? Does the reaction in each instance relate itself to any harmonizing central activity in his mind ; in other words, what significance do the several themes assume eventually in the poet's mind, and does that significance in each case bear the touch of the poet's own inward intellectual and emotional attitude towards life ?

3 .Conception.

What shape, or *form*, or conception did each significance finally resolve itself into the poet's mind under the stress of that attitude of his towards life ?

4. Diction.

What language or diction did the poet choose to clothe his conception while transmitting them to others? How far did he employ the conventional machinery; and how far did he deviate from it ?

5. *Technique and Form.*

What devices did he employ to introduce harmony into the diction and give it a form? Can his obligations be traced? Why did particular "Radifs" and particular forms appeal to him during the different periods of his poetic production, or why certain "Radifs" were never handled by him at all? And why in one and the same Ghazal or in one and the same form of expression lines of great excellence and of poor quality exist side by side?

It must be fairly clear by now that in estimating the worth of a Ghazal-writer, such as Ghalib, we should not only look to the poetic process in each distich or line-poem but to the value of the entire production of such distichs considered cumulatively. And cumulative consideration of subjective poetry means building upon the poet's own outlook on life. Proper judgement in such cases is, therefore, possible only when the specification of that outlook is made.

CHAPTER V.

GHALIB'S OUTLOOK ON LIFE.

The outlook of a man is not a definite thing. In most cases, it is of very gradual growth. It forms and re-forms itself as life advances. We, therefore, think of it not as a static entity but as a dynamic force, rising as the human organism, passing into childhood, and from childhood into adolescence, and so on into manhood, maturity, and fruition, or absolescence. The outlook of a man is thus the attitude which his mind assumes towards life as the result of diverse forces, internal as well as external, working upon it, from stage to stage, in its development. An investigation into the problem will, for this reason, have to be pursued historically. In other words, the student will, before he attempts any cyclic consideration of Ghalib's outlook, be called upon to acquaint himself with the history and character of the several forces which must have reacted on his mind during his lifetime.

EXTERNAL INFLUENCE.

To begin with, he should enquire into the influences born of his early home training, and of his education. If, as Ghalib says, his father and his only uncle died when he was five * 1., who were those who brought him up afterwards? What type of people were they? In what manner could they have affected his mind? What education was he given? Who were his teachers? Abdus Samad and Shayk Muazzam are stated to be among his teachers. What influence could

* 1. p. 105 Consolidated 'Urdu-i-Mu'alla', Lahore, 1926.

they have exerted on him? What other teachers had he whose influence could be traced? What subjects and books was he fed upon: what among them he liked best? There are references to suggest that the poet was influenced in his art of Ghazal writing by Naziri, Urfi, Zahuri, Talib, Shayk Ali Hazin, Talib-i-Amili. These may have affected his technique. But how did they affect his ideas?

Another factor which governs the development of a man's mind is the social environment in which it grows. Ghalib was born at Agra. But a good portion of his youth was spent at Delhi where he had settled down and been introduced to the Court of Bahadur Shah. That Court was the symbol of a social order which was fast disintegrating all over North India. What was the effect which this new atmosphere produced on the mind of the poet? Ghalib made Delhi his home. But circumstances of his life took him sometimes to Calcutta, sometimes to Lucknow, Rampur, Benares, and other places, and brought him into contact with a variety of men and things. Could the student trace the impressions which the poet gathered from place to place?

This done, the student should find out if there were events in the poet's life which from their character must have interfered with his normal outlook on life. The course of a man's life does not always run smooth. Events do occur which deflect his mind from its habitual rut. One such was the poet's imprisonment for alleged gambling. Another was the Great Indian Mutiny. The

Mutiny was a great catastrophe in the life of the Muslim community and affected many a Muslim. It affected Ghalib also, more especially on the economic side of his life. Of the two events, it is the imprisonment which should be regarded as of greater personal significance. That he felt its bitterness keenly there can be no doubt. Says he :--

میری یہ آرزو ہے کہ اب دنیا میں نہ رہوں - اور اگر رہوں
توہندوستان میں نہ رہوں - روم ہے مصر ہے ایران ہے
بغداد ہے - یہ بھی جانے دو - کعبہ آزادونکی جائے پناہ اور
آستانہ رحمۃ للعالمین دلدادونکی تکیہ گاہ ہے - دیکھیئے وہ
وقت کب آئیگا کہ درماندگی کی قید سے، جو اس گزری
ہوئی قید سے زیادہ جانفرسا ہے نجات پاؤں - اور بغیر اسکے
کہ کوئی منزل مقصود قرار دوں سربصحرا نکل جاؤں-

This event happened about 20 years before he died,*1 and the student must therefore seek in the poetry of his closing years for signs of reaction that might have set in. While in prison, Ghalib wrote a 'tarkib band' in Persian in which he betrayed signs of misanthropy:--

آنچہ فرداست هم امروز درآمد گوئی
آفتاب از جہت قبلہ بر آمد گوئی
دل و دستے کہ مرا بود فروماند ز کار
شب و روزے کہ مرا بود سر آمد گوئی
بہرۂ اہل جہاں چوں زجہاں درد و غم است
بہرۂ من ز جہاں بیشتر آمد گوئی
راز دانہ غم رسوائی جاوید بلاست
بہر آزار غم از قید فرنگم نبود

* 1. p. 27 'Yadgar-i-Ghalib', Lahore 1924.

جور اعدا رود از دل برہائی لیکن
طعن، احباب نم از زخم فرنگم نبود

Was this a suddan growth excited by his unmerited misfortune or was it but an intensified expression of what existed in him already? If this was a spontaneous growth of the prison house, did any events occur in his life subsequently to mellow the strain or did he carry this into his grave, and allowed all that came in his way to be vitiated by its memory?

PERSONAL STRAINS.

Apart from ascertaining the external facts of his life which must have affected his thought, attempt should be made to find out the strains Ghalib inherited from his ancestors or developed independently.

The poet, as is evident from his writings, makes all his ancestors, as far back as he could remember mercenary soldiers, some of them including his father meeting with violent death. And he takes pride in the fact:-

سو پشت سے ہے پیشہ آبا سپہ گری
کچھ شاعری ذریعہ عزت نہیں مجھے

If this mercine^ss were a characteristic of his line, did the strain in any form express itself in the poet? Can any other strains be traced,strains of the nature which might have affected his habits, his moods, his character? For otherwise, it will become rather difficult to explain some of his peculiar traits and idiosyncracies

and understand the man shorn of his limitations. If any student is not however willing to believe in the theory of heredity in life and art, he will have to find answers to all the riddles that Ghalib presents for solution, and show how he developed the several strains which are so powerfully reflected in his writings.

THE NOTE OF DISCONTENT

The note of discontent runs, right through Ghalib's life. It is the most vociferous note in the poet. What was this discontent? There is a form of discontent called Divine which makes one feel that the world around him is not what it should be and which creates a yearning in him to see higher and nobler thoughts dwell on earth, thoughts such as promote more fully the Divine purpose in man. There is another form which expresses itself in dissatisfaction with one's surroundings and with one's own condition of life, discontent born of the sense of real or fancied loss or of neglect, discontent which makes one a misanthrope or a cynic. This was the kind of discontent which seized the very soul of Ghalib. The student will not find it difficult to arrive at this conclusion. It is writ large on the poet's forehead and is powerfully reflected in his writings. What the student should aim at is to find out the mainspring of this discontent.

Ghalib complained always of two things---want of appreciation of his literary effort, and economic distress. The two complaints need careful examination.

It must be remembered that Ghalib migrated at an early age from his birth-place Agra to Delhi, and settled down there permanently. What was the treatment Delhi meted out to him? The Court welcomed him and afforded him privileges which were within its competence. It conferred on him the titles of Najmud-Dowlah, Dabir-ul-Mulk, and Nizam Jung, the very highest titles that one outside the imperial family could aspire to in those days. It also gave him an allowanc not handsome, but handsome enough from a ruler wh was himself in indigent circumstances. These titles anc the allowance were granted to him not because he followed the mercenary profession of his ancestors, but because of his literary attainments. They were adequate signs of recognition of his merits. Such recognition he also received from Lucknow and Rampur. In addition, there were not literary men wanting in their appreciation of his poetry. Men like Fazl-i-Haq and Nabi Baksh, the critics for whose opinion Ghalib held the highest regard, always expressed very great admiration for his poetic gifts, and were in fact instrumental in inspiring him to higher efforts. Besides, Ghalib had an ever widening circle of friends and admirers who looked up to him for inspiration and guidance in their own poetical pursuits, admirers like Hali, Nayyar, Salik, Majruh, Tafta, Shayfta, and Wahshat, to mention them for brevity's sake by their pen-names.

Still Ghalib would not feel content. He should have known that he was a poet of the few, and could not reach the many as his contemporary Zawq did. His diction and style were, as a rule, so recondite that he

should have realised that he could not take the crowd to ramble with him in the by-paths of his exuberant though at times quaint imagination. His consolation should have been the consciousness that he had of his own worth :

تا ز دیوانم کہ سرمست سخن خواہد شدن
این مئے از قحط خریداری کہن خواہد شدن
کوکبم را در عدم اوج قبولی بودہ است
شہرت شعرم بہ گیتی بعد من خواہد شدن

Too often did he poet forgot his own high hopes.

A similar attitude did he assume in his financial affairs. There is the independent evidence of Hali that Ghalib was never in indigent circumstances. There was no end to financial aid from his friends and patrons. Yet he never felt satiated with what he had. He imagined like Burns that he was born a prodigy and that the world was in duty bound to keep him above want, and offer him every honour. The truth is that the world around him did keep him above want and did honour him. No other man of letters of his time was offered anything better. But the mind of Ghalib was so constituted that he would not recognise that which was offered to him both by Providence and by man. He always grumbled and grumbled unmanfully.

دل میں ذوق وصل و یاد یار تک باقی نہیں
آگ اس گھر میں لگی ایسی کہ جو تھا جل گیا
مزے جہاں کے اپنی نظر میں خاک نہیں
سوائے خون جگر، سو جگر میں خاک نہیں

میری قسمت میں غم گر اتنا تھا
دل بھی یا رب کئی دیے ہوتے

ہے سبزہ زار ہر در و دیوار غمکدہ
جس کی بہار یہ ہو پھر اس کی خزاں نہ پوچھ

زندگی اپنی جب اس شکل سے گزری غالب
ہم بھی کیا یاد کریں گے کہ خدا رکھتے تھے

جسے نصیب ہو روز سیاہ میرا سا
وہ شخص دن نہ کہے رات کو تو کیونکر ہو

وقت آسیا بگردش و ما در میان او
غالب دگر مپرس کہ برما چہ می رود

جوہر طبعم درخشان ست لیک
روزم اندر ابر پنہان میرود

نومیدی ما گردش ایام ندارد
روزی کہ سیاہ شد سحر و شام ندارد

These are stray lines which may not altogether have much personal significance. But take his Persian Masnawi *Abr-i-guharbar* written a few years before he died which is one long prayer invoking divine parden for his earthly shortcomings. That was a place where he was expected to hang down his head in humilation for having thrown away the divine gifts which he had received in abundance, poetic gifts capable of inspiring him to immortal songs of cheer and comfort to the really distressed in life, thrown away in the persuit of what was unsubstantial. Ghalib does nothing of the kind. He turns round on God and accuses Him of having given him unberable sorrow and misery, misery such as rendered a hearty appreciation of his gifts impossible for him.

مرا نیز یارائے گفتار دہ
چہ گویم بران گفتہ زنہار دہ
درین خستگی پوزش از من مجوے
بود بندہ خستہ گستاخ گوے
من اندوہگین و مئے اندوہ رباے
چہ می کردم اے بندہ پرور خداے
حساب مئے و رامش و رنگ و بوے
ز جمشید و بہرام و پرویز جوے
نہ از من کہ از تاب مئے گاہ گاہ
بدریوزہ رخ بردہ باشم سیاہ
چو پرسش رگے را بکارد ز دل
چو صد دجلہ خونم تراود ز دل
بہر جرم کز روئے دفتر رسد
ز من حسرتے در برابر رسد
بفرمائے کاین داوری چون بود
کہ از جرم من حسرت افزون بود
ہر آئینہ ہمچون منی را بہ بند
تلافی فراخور بود نے گزند
بہ گیتی درم بینوا داشتی
دل من اسیر ہوا داشتی
نہ بخشندہ شاہے نہ بارم دہد
بہر بار زر پیل بارم دہد
کہ چون پیل زانجا بر آنگیزمے
زرش بر گدایان فرو ریزمے

When a man's unhappiness takes this form of protest against his God, he needs sympathy. The student should move cautiously when tracing the growth of this feeling

in him, and explain how a man so richly endowed with intellect and common sense could have let his mind be soaked in bitterness to this extent. There is the explanation of Hali that Ghalib chose this field of misanthropic discontent for the display of his poetic faculty, as other poets had chosen other fields, such as, of Love and Praise. This apologetic explanation is so fanciful that it should not weigh seriously with the student of Ghalib. It is not literary criticism. It is misdirected courtesy. Who can weep, day in, and day out, just for the luxury of it? The student must interrogate Ghalib himself and must believe him when he repeatedly protests, both in verse and prose, that he is really unhappy.

HIS RELIGION.

There is another strain in Ghalib which deserves notice. Religion is a matter of the deepest concern with most men and women. They do not play with it, much less disclaim it for wordly considerations. But Ghalib always played hide and seek with it. Take a well-known attempt in 'Masnavi' to absolve Bahadur Shah of possible Shiah tendencies.

Hali states:

جب یہ مثنوی لکھنو بھیجی تو مجتہد العصر نے مرزا سے
دریافت کیا کہ آپ نے خود مذہب شیعہ اور مرزا حیدر شکوہ
کی نسبت اس مثنوی میں ایسا اور ایسا لکھا ہے - مرزا نے
لکھ بھیجا کہ میں ملازم سرکار ہوں جو کچھ بادشاہ کا حکم ہوتا
ہے اسی کی تعمیل کرتا ہوں - مثنوی کا مضمون بادشاہ اور

حکیم احسن اللہ خاں کی طرف سے اور الفاظ میری طرف سے تصور فرمائیے۔

Notice also how meekly he agreed to please his friend Moulana Fazle Haq by writing a Masnavi in Persian against a Wahabi tenet much against his personal inclination. Notice also his Rubai addressed to Bahadur Shah.

جن لوگوں کو ھے مجھ سے عداوت گہری
کہتے ھیں مجھے وہ رافضی اور دھری
دھری کیونکر ھو جو کہ ھووے صوفی
شیعی کیونکر ھو ماوراء النہری

Yet fancy how he subscribes himself in a private letter to a Shiah friend of his, Syed Ghulam Husayn Bilgrami -غالب اثنا عشری حیدری! Why all this evasiveness? Why, to borrow a phrase from Hali, was Ghalib so صلح کل or accomodating in a matter of such deep import to him in life ?

HIS PATRIOTISM.

There is yet another strain which the student of Ghalib will be called upon to examine, the tendency to keep the man in power in good humour. So long as Bahadur Shah was there in the Fort of Delhi dealing out from his scanty income an allowance to Ghalib, the poet was ready to shower eulogistic verses on him. But when the great catastrophe in the story of Indian Islam happened and the poor and hapless monarch was exiled from the land of his birth, the land where his Imperial

ancestors had reigned supreme for centuries, what did Ghalib do? The British Agents at Delhi suspected him of complicity with the Court and stopped his pension. What frantic efforts did not Ghalib make to free himself from this charge, and get back his pension and 'Khalat'*1. All in vain. He sent a Qasida to the Governor-General hailing the new order of things. He received a curt reply saying that the British needed such entertainment no longer. For nearly three years the poet lived in practical segregation, lived without his pension, and without his 'Khalat', lived on the bounty of his friends. All this time he was anxious to be returned to favour. Read his Ode to Queen Victoria. Read the letters to his friends expressing his irrepressible delight at the restoration of his 'Khalat' and his pension.

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* 1. The present chapter on the Outlook of Ghalib orginally appeared a year and a half ago in Vol. I. No. 2 of the 'Osmania Magazine' and was subsequently reproduced in the 1927 Annual Number of the 'Moslem Chronicle' Calcutta. During the time that has elapsed since then, the views of the author expressed in the section about Ghalib's patriotism appear to have made some people think and also strengthened them to speak out the truth they have, as is evidenced from the leader contributed by the learned editor of the 'Urdu' of Awrangabad to its Vol. 8. No. 31, July 1928, in which the writer has reproduced a statement written by Ghalib himself containing facts which bear out the author's contention published over a year ago. The statement was, as the learned editor himself says, within his knowledge for several years. How well it would have been if only he had influenced himself sufficiently to publish it when the statement came at first to his knowledge, and thereby put a stop to all the noisy prating that we have had to listen for such a long time to about Ghalib's nationalism. For fuller statement see Appendix II.

Yet attempt has been made by the poet's admirers to suggest that Ghalib was a patriot, that he felt bitterly the downfall of the Muslim power, that lines such as the following are expressions of that bitterness :---

ھندوستان سایہ گل پایہ تخت تھا
جاہ و جلال عہد وصال بتاں نہ پوچھ
ہر داغ تازہ یک دل داغ انتظار ھے
عرض فضاے سینہ درد امتحاں نہ پوچھ
گلشن میں بند و بست برنگ دگر ھے آج
قمری کا طوق حلقہ بیرون در ھے آج
آتا ھے ایک پارہ دل ہر فغاں کے ساتھ
تار نفس کمند شکار اثر ھے آج

These who read the tragedy of 1857 in the above lines probably do not know that these lines were composed nearly forty years before the Indian Mutiny. (Vide the Bhopal MS., of Ghalib's Urdu Diwan complied in 1237 A. H. or 1821). They have no more reference to the Mutiny than

دل ناداں تجھے ہوا کیا ھے
آخر اس درد کی دوا کیا ھے
میں بھی منہ میں زبان رکھتا ہوں
کاش پوچھو کہ ماجرا کیا ھے
جبکہ تجھ بن نہیں کوئی موجود
پھر یہ ہنگامہ اے خدا کیا ھے

Read what Hali has to say :— *1.

جیسا کہ ان کی تحریرات سے ظاہر ہے تمام عمر ملکۂ معظمہ
اور ویسراؤں لفٹننٹ گورنروں اور دیگر حاکموں اور
افسروں اور تمام انگلش قوم کی مدح سرائی میں بسر کی۔
بعض افسروں کی وفات پر دردناک مرثیے لکھے اور ہمیشہ
جیسا کہ چاہیے اپنے تئیں وابستگان دامن دولت انگلشیہ سے
سمجھتے رہے۔

HIS SUFISM.

It has been seriously suggested by several of Ghalib's critics that he was a great Sufi. Was he? Mere intellectual perception of an idea is one thing. Living up to it is another. Besides, expressions embodying Sufi tenents have been among the conventional stock-in-trade of Ghazal writers. Notice what Ghalib himself says :—

آرایش مضامین شعر کے واسطے کچھ تصوف، کچھ نجوم
لگا رکھا ہے۔ ورنہ سوائے موزونی طبع کے یہاں اور کیا رکھا ہے۔

The student will therefore be careful not to jump to the conclusion that Ghalib was a Sufi merely because there are lines in his poems which express Sufi ideas. They may be mere intellectual exercises on the conventional lines. The student should not treat them seriously unless he is convinced that they truely reflect the character and bent of his mind and action. A real Sufi is not one who simply believes in it, but one who feels it inwardly and governs all his thoughts and actions accordingly. All that is, is. Nothing is out of place.

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* 1. p. 379 Yadgar, Karimi Press.

Everything is good in itself. Everything fits into His scheme. He knows it. To question Him is to deny Him. To love Him, and feel that all that is, is from Him, and is good, is to live the Sufi. To grumble at His scheme of things, to grow a discontented soul is not Sufi-like. The student must bear this in mind when he examines Ghalib and his philosophy.

There are people who claim many things for Ghalib not the least in importance among them being "a robust optimism." They always cite lines from his Diwan in support of their contention. The student should examine such lines carefully and see whether they are creative in character or exclusively subjective. Shakespeare created many scoundrels but no sensible student of literature will say that he was a scoundrel himself. The poet places himself in innumerable situations and interprets under the stress of his imagination diverse moods and feelings having absolutely no personal bearing. Once he gives expression to them, they are no more a part of him. Not so those expressions or utterences which embody a persistent note and which from their unchanging colour seem to be made of the very texture of the poet's life or personality. In the examination of his outlook, it is the poems and lines of the latter category that the student will be immediately concerned with. His creative poetry will engage his attention when he considers the poet's art.

We have indicated above the several leading factors which seem to have worked in varying combination from time to time to promote Ghalib's poetic outlook on life. In what peculiar manner each has acted

and reacted on the rest, is for the student to work out. But whatever his conclusions, whatever the proportion in which he will find the several elements—the influences external and internal—intermixed, one conclusion he is bound to arrive at, if he is not carried away by impulses, that one element has subjugated the rest and held them all under its spell, viz., the discontent of the man. That discontent has already been characterized as misanthropic. What was it all about? Was it because he really believed that the world in which he lived was peopled by pigmies incapable of rising with him to the heights of his imagination? If that were so, it was a matter for his deep sympathy. In any case it was not a subject for grumbling at "the Giver of all gifts." Was it because he had any domestic sorrow over the loss of those near and dear to him? If that were so, where comes in then his wit or pleasantry which Hali talks of so much as being his perennial companion? What was this discontent then about? Read the following :—

میں نے نواب مختار الملک کو قصیدہ بھیجا - کچھ قدر دانی نہ فرمائی - ردیف بیہ میں ایک مثنوی جو سابق میں لکھی تہی وہ محی الدین ولہ کو بھیجی - رسید بھی نہ آئی - ایک کم ستر برس کی عمر ہوئی - سوائے شہرت خشک کے فن شعر کا پھل نہ پایا - فرمانروایان عصر معتقد ہوے - مگر کچھ ہاتھ نہ آیا -

Also

بوعلی سینا کے علم اور نظیری کے شعر کو ضائع اور بے فائدہ اور موہوم جانتا ہوں - زیست بسر کرنے کو کچھ تھوڑی سی

Also

راحت درکار ہے - اور باقی حکمت و سلطنت اور شاعری اور ساحری سب خرافات ہے - ہندوستان میں اگر کوئی اوتار ہوا تو کیا اور مسلمانوں میں نبی بنا تو کیا - دنیا میں نام آور ہوے تو کیا اور گمنام جئے تو کیا - کچھہ وجہ معاش ہو اور کچھہ صحت جسمانی - باقی سب وہم ہے -

Also

انہوں نے بارہا ایسا کیا کہ ایک کا قصیدہ دوسرے کے نام پر کردیا - میں باپ کا قصیدہ بیٹے کے نام پر کردیا تو کیا غضب ہوا - اور پھر کیسی حالت اور کیسی مصیبت میں - اس قصدے سے مجھکو غرض دستگاہ سخن منظور نہیں - گدائی منظور ہے -

Also

حضرت زبدۃ العلما کا ابتک وہاں نہ پہنچنا تعجب کی بات ہے - حق تعالی انکو جہاں ہیں اپنے حفظ و امان میں رکھے - جب چاہیں وہاں پہنچیں میرا مقصود تو اتنا ہی ہے کہ قصیدہ گذرے اور کچھہ ہمارے تمہارے ہاتھ آئے

Quotations may be multiplied. The fact stands that Ghalib had great gifts vouchsafed to him. But he threw then away in his search for Mammon, and as the saying goes, "ye cannot serve God and Mammon", he neither enjoyed the peace of mind that he so much longed for, nor attained distinction commensurate with his high abilities.

CHAPTER VI.

GREATNESS IN POETRY.

If thou indeed derive thy light from Heaven,
Then, to the measure of that heaven-born light,
Shine, Poet! in thy place, and be content:--
The stars pre-eminent in magnitude,
And they that from the zenith dart their beams,
(Visible though they be to half the earth,
Though half a sphere be conscious of their brightness)
Are yet of no diviner origin,
No purer essence, than the one that burns,
Like an untended watch-fire, on the ridge
Of some dark mountain; or than those which seem
Humbly to hang, like twinkling winter lamps,
Among the branches of the leafless trees;
All are the undying offspring of one Sire:
Then, to the measure of the light vouchsafed,
Shine, Poet! in thy place, and be content

The light, the Divine light which Wordsworth speaks of here is the soul of poetry. To some that light may be vouchsafed in large measure: to others in but small. Some poets may shine like stars pre-eminent in magnitude: some may hang humbly like twinkling winter lamps among the branches of the leafless trees- Everyone, if he truely is a poet, must derive his light from one Sire.

Such a light makes the mind of the poet its dwelling place. Living there it tends him with the tenderness of a loving mother; dispells the darkness out of his way, darkness such as besets the mind of man; and

prepares him "to see into the life of things". Not every poet responds to this tenderness, reciprocates its affectionate, nursing. For the road to greatness in poetry is a difficult road to traverse. Some never grow conscious of the light vouchsafed to them; some inherit darkness too dense to let them enjoy the light. Those of the first category write poetry without realising its divine character and its great function in life. They enjoy the things of life, may be, at times with acute keenness. But their enjoyment is the enjoyment of a child. It has no significance for them. A primrose to them is but a primrose, an yellow flower pleasant to look at. Such poets stand, or dance where they are and feel happy. They have no thought for the march onward. Those who belong to the second category are the children of darkness. Gifted, sometimes, with remarkable power of expression, they employ their gift either to ventilate, or to cater for, the baser passions of man.

There are, however, others who are conscious, and gratefully conscious too, of the light vouchsafed to them. They resolutely enter on the journey, the journey which leads to the City of God from where radiates, as they believe, the harmony which "rolls through all things". Not every one reaches the destination. To the measure of the light vouchsafed, every one makes his advance. Some drop on the way, light exhausted; some struggle on and are lost in darkness. Some are so much overpowered by this darkness, "the fierce confederate storm of sorrow", that they know not whither to tend.

Alas! I have nor hope, nor health,
Nor peace within, nor calm around,
Nor that content, surpassing wealth,
The sage in meditation found,
And walked with inward glory crowned---
Nor fame, nor power, nor love, nor leisure:
Others I see whom these surround---
Smiling they live, and call life pleasure;
To me that cup has been dealt in another measure.

Yet now despair itself is mild
Even as the winds and waters are;
I could lie down like a tired child,
And weep away the life of care
Which I have borne, and yet must bear,
Till death like sleep might steal on me,
And I might feel in the warm air
My cheek grow cold, and hear the sea
Breathe o'er my dying brain its last monotony.

---Shelley.

Rather its ever-lasting monotony!

A few of those who are thus overpowered falter back to where they started from. Growing sober there, they ponder over their sad experience. They feel that life is inexplicable; but consolation they must have. Restless as they are, they take refuge in an ideal world of their own, an ideal world of thought or of imagination.

There are a few who, sad and distracted as they are, as they see their light grow dim, feel nevertheless strengthened with the idea that there are others who have reached the goal, and that they too might yet do likewise if only further light were vouchsafed to them.

They do not risk further advance; they do not falter back. They stand and wait in hope.

O life unlike to ours!
Who fluctuate idly without term or scope,
Of whom each strives, nor knows for what he strives,
And each half lives a hundred different lives;
Who wait like thee, but not, like thee, in hope.

Thou waitest for the spark from Heaven! and we,
Light half-believers of our casual creeds,
Who never deeply felt, nor clearly will'd,
Whose insight never has borne fruit in deeds,
Whose vague resolves never have been fulfill'd,
For whom each year we see
Breeds new beginnings, disappointments new;
Who hesitate and falter life away,
And lose to-morrow the ground won to-day---
Ah, do not we, wanderer, await it too?

Yes! we await it, but it still delays,
And then we suffer! and amongst us one,
Who most has suffered, takes dejectedly
His seat upon the intellectual throne;
And all his store of sad experience he
Lays bare of wretched days;
Tells us his misery's birth and growth and signs,
And how the dying spark of hope was fed,
And how the breast was soothed, and how the head,
And all his hourly varied anodynes.

This for our wisest! and we others pine,
And wish the long unhappy dream would end,
And waive all claim to bliss, and try to bear,
With close-lipped patience for our only friend,
Sad patience, too near neighbour to despair;
But none has hope like thine!

--- Arnold.

Some of these may wait in vain; yet they trust:

Oh yet we trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill,
To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt, and taints of blood;

That nothing walks with aimless feet;
That not one life shall be destroyed,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete;

That not a worm is cloven in vain;
That not a moth with vain desire
Is shrivel'd in a fruitless fire,
Or but subserves another's gain.

Behold, we know not anything;
I can but trust that good shall fall
At last---far off---at last, to all,
And every winter change to spring.

So runs my dream: but what am I?
An infant crying in the night:
An infant crying for the light:
And with no language but a cry.

---Tennyson.

Only a few complete their journey. It is they who enjoy the sense of harmony in life, the life of the entire creation. It is they who are truly great; no matter what station in life they occupy; no matter they are no poets, possess no gift of poetic expression.

. . . . And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts: a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,

And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things.

To some this comes through faith, to others through contemplation, or faith and contemplation.

Aye, note that Potter's wheel,
That metaphor! and feel
Why time spins fast, why passive lies our clay,
Thou, to whom fools propound,
When the wine makes its round,
'Since life fleets, all is change; the Past gone, seize to-day!'

Fool! All that is, at all,
Lasts ever, past recall;
Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand sure:
What entered into thee,
That was, is, and shall be:
Time's wheel runs back or stops; Potter and clay endure.

He fixed thee mid this dance
Of plastic circumstance,
This Present, thou, forsooth, wouldst fain arrest?
Machinery just meant
To give thy soul its bent,
Try thee and turn thee forth, sufficiently impressed.

What though the earlier grooves
Which ran the laughing loves
Around thy base, no longer pause and press?
What though, about thy rim,
Skull-things in order grim
Grow out, in graver mood, obey the sterner stress?

Look not thou down but up!
To uses of a cup,
The festal board, lamp's flash and trumpet's peal,

The new wine's foaming flow,
The Master's lips aglow!
Thou, heaven's consummate cup, what need'st thou with earth's wheel?

But I need, now as then,
Thee, God, who mouldest men;
And since, not even while the whirl was worst,
Did I,-- to the wheel of life
With shapes and colours rife,
Bound dizzily,---mistake my end, to slake thy thirst:

So, take and use Thy work!
Amend what flaws may lurk,
What strain o' the stuff, what warpings past the aim!
My times be in Thy hand!
Perfect the cup as planned!
Let age approve of youth, and death complete the same!

R. Browning.

Where such harmony has been achieved, that mind becomes a "mansion for all lovely forms". There the poet enjoys very often the mood

that blessed mood
In which the burthen of the mystery,
In which the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world,
Is lightened---that serene and blessed mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on,
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul?
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy
We see into the life of things.

Such a mind draws into it the entire creation for enjoyment and reflection.

For I must tread on shadowy ground, must sink
Deep, and aloft ascending breathe in worlds
To which the heaven of heavens is but a veil.
All strength---all terror, single or in bands,
That ever was put forth in personal form---
Jehovah---with his thunder, and the choir
Of shouting Angels, and empyreal thrones---
I pass them unalarmed. Not Chaos, not
The darkest pit of lowest Erebus,
Nor aught of blinder vacancy, scooped out
By help of dreams---can breed such fear and awe
As fall upon us often when we look
Into our Minds, into the Mind of Man---
My haunt, and the main region of my song.

'o few is given the power to attain such a conquest f mind, but attainment in some form or in some degree ust be reached, if greatness in some form or in some egree is to be achieved.

By laying such strong emphasis on the presence of his sense of harmony in poetry, we do not in the least uggest that the function of a poet is necessarily, or lways, to show that in anything that he writes. He may, s already pointed out, just express what he feels or njoys for the moment and rest content with that. No ne will deny him the rank of a poet for not having nter-related or interpreted things which he has felt, or njoyed in his mind from time to time. But if one desires o know what place he should be given in the order of oets, there could be no doubt that such a poet should e given an inferior place to one like him who has not nly enjoyed and expressed equally well, but pondered ver his experience and developed a sense of harmony n his mind under the searchlight of which he looks back

over his experience and in one supreme effort universalizes or idealises it.

The supreme effort is the determining factor in poetry. One may feel a great poetical experience under the influence of a great sense of harmony but, unless that experience is communicated by means of language wrought into a great poem, we shall not have great poetry.

The supreme effort is not made possible until the supreme moment arrives, when all the experience of one's life is interfused into an inclusive experience, cognizant of every constituent experience, yet transcendant. A poet may feel diverse experiences. Each experience may suggest an aspect of his mind. The expression of each aspect may be effective, may be pleasant. But not each such expression need signify greatness. Wordsworth, for instance, wrote many poems: but he does not rise to greatness in each. Some of his poems are as dull as dullness could be. In the *Excursion,* quite a serious attempt of the poet, one may easily come across bald prose just cut into periods. Such lapses do not, however, detract from Wordsworth's achievement, from what he gained when he wrote such poems as the *Ode on Immortality.* In such poems the inclusive experience is at play: the great moments are wrought into a supreme moment: the great accents are strung into a great song.

So then, it is a great poetic experience interwoven by an overspreading sense of harmony into a great poem that makes a great poet.

Let us come back to Ghalib.

CHAPTER VII

GHALIB'S POETRY

A careful examination of Ghalib's poetry will show that it is essentially intellectual in character. Throughout his life the poet was obsessed with one desire, and that was to appear original in his thought and expression. In a way, he did achieve this object: but he did it at the expense of poetry. In his Urdu verse there seems to be more of art, rather artifice, than poetry; more of thought or imagination or fancy than feeling. Even where there is feeling, there is a conscious attempt to charge it with intellect.

Recent criticism in Urdu has invested Ghalib with strange powers. He is made to range at will over the entire Universe for his poetic enjoyment.

لوح سے تمت تک مشکل سے سو صفحے ھیں لیکن کیا ھے جو یہاں حاضر نہیں ھے کونسا نغمہ ھے جو اس ساز زندگی کے تاروں میں بیدار یا خوابیدہ موجود نہیں ھے

The thing is echoed and re-echoed.

The Diwan, however, speaks its own simple story. From age to age, the Ghazal writer has gibed at piety, posed as a Sufi or a Philosopher, aimed is slings at the sky, babbled out his own superiority as a poet, played the lover, handled the wine cup, and performed similar performances. Ghalib did not deviate very much from this much-trodden path. The same hoary themes came in for treatment in his poetry. Only, he gave them a

new intellectual colouring. If he broke any new ground at all, he did it in the domain of pessimism. When we say he broke new ground, we mean that he let his own inward discontent give this age-long theme of pessimism a personal bearing. Here he stands by himself, the picture of a man out to enjoy the material things of life but thwarted by his circumstances, rather by the Nemesis which attends all inordinate desires.

Ghalib's verse may be classified broadly into three groups. The first group consists of deliberate intellectual exercises in the conventional style, the conceits which Hali speaks of in his *Yadgar* attempted by way of vying with other Ghazal writers. Here the poet traverses the conventional ground. He is a scoffer, a lover, a Sufi, a philosopher, and so on. But bent as he is on innovation, he invents his own verbal robe for each conventional pose.

نقش فریادی ہے کس کی شوخی تحریر کا
کاغذی ہے پیرہن ہر پیکر تصویر کا

نکوهش هے سزا فریادیٔ بیداد دلبر کی
مبادا خندۂ دنداں نما هو صبح محشر کی

رگ لیلیٰ کو خاک دشت مجنوں ریشگی بخشے
اگر بو دے بجائے دانه دهقاں نوک نشتر کی

پر پروانه شاید بادباں کشتیٔ مے تها
هوئی مجلس کی گرمی سے روانی دور ساغر کی

کروں بیداد ذوق پرفشانی عرض کیا قدرت
که طاقت اڑ گئی اڑنے سے پہلے میرے شہپر کی

کہاں تک روؤں اس کے خیمے کے پیچھے قیامت هے
مری قسمت میں یارب کیا نه تهی دیوار پتهر کی

هے عدم میں غنچه محو عبرت انجام گل
یک جہاں زانو تامل در قفائے خنده هے

کلفت افسردگی کو عیش بے تابی حرام
ورنه دنداں در دل افسردن بنائے خنده هے

پوچھ مت رسوائی انداز استغنائے حسن
دست مرهون حنا رخسار رهن غازه تها

The second group expresses feelings but half felt in his mind, feelings born of his characteristic attitude towards life, but which he either clothes in conventional phraseology or subjects to various fanciful verbal devices.

شوق هر رنگ رقیب سر و ساماں نکلا
قیس تصویر کے پرده میں بهی عریاں نکلا

کیوں گردش مدام سے گھبرا نہ جائے دل
انسان ہوں پیالہ و ساغر نہیں ہوں میں

وائے واں بھی شور محشر نے نہ دم لینے دیا
لے گیا تھا گور میں ذوق تن آسانی مجھے

کہتا ہے کون نالۂ بلبل ہے بے اثر ؟
پردہ میں گل کے لاکھ جگر پاش ہو گئے

غم دنیا سے گر پائی ہے فرصت سر اٹھانے کی
فلک کا دیکھنا تقریب تیرے یاد آنے کی

اُگا ہے گھر میں ہر سو سبزہ ویرانی تماشا کر
مدار اب کھودنے پر گھاس کے ہے میرے دربان کا

دوست غمخواری میں میری سعی فرمائنگے کیا
زخم کے بھرنے تلک ناخن نہ بڑھ جائنگے کیا

حنائے پائے خزاں ہے بہار اگر ہے یہی
دوام کلفت خاطر ہے – عیش دنیا کا

فنا تعلیم درس بیخودی ہوں اس زمانے سے
کہ مجنوں لام الف لکھتا تھا دیوار دبستاں پر

خلش غمزۂ خوں ریز نہ پوچھ
دیکھ – خونابہ فشانی میری

The third group embodies feelings so keenly felt, so intensely personal in nature that the poet does not stop to fetter them in studied artifice.

دم لیا تھا نہ قیامت نے ہنوز   کیوں ترا وقت سفر یاد آیا

عرض نیاز عشق کے قابل نہیں رہا   جس دل پہ ناز تھا مجھے وہ دل نہیں رہا

آگے آتی تھی حال دل پہ ہنسی   اب کسی بات پر نہیں آتی

تھی وہ اک شخص کے تصور سے   اب وہ رعنائی خیال کہاں

تم اپنے شکوہ کی باتیں نہ کھود کے پوچھو
حذر کرو مرے دل سے کہ اس میں آگ دبی ہے

خموشی میں یہاں خون گشتہ لاکھوں آرزوئیں ہیں
چراغ مردہ ہوں میں بے زباں گور غریباں کا

کرتے کس منہ سے ہو غربت کی شکایت غالب
تم کو بے مہری یاران وطن یاد نہیں

سنبھلنے دے مجھے اے ناامیدی کیا قیامت ہے
کہ دامان خیال یار چھوٹا جائے ہے مجھ سے

نیند اسکی ہے دماغ اس کا ہے راتیں اسکی ہیں
تیری زلفیں جس کے بازو پر پریشاں ہو گئیں

دیکھنا تقریر کی لذت کہ جو اس نے کہا
میں نے یہ جانا کہ گویا یہ بھی میرے دل میں ہے

وہ بادۂ شبانہ کی سرمستیاں کہاں
اٹھیے بس اب کہ لذت خواب سحر گئی

عمر بھر کا تو نے پیمان وفا باندھا تو کیا
عمر کو بھی تو نہیں ہے پائیداری ہائے ہائے
شرم رسوائی سے جا چھپنا نقاب خاک میں
ختم ہے الفت کی تجھ پر پردہ داری ہائے ہائے
گوش مہجور پیام و چشم محروم وصال
ایک دل تس پر یہ ناامیدواری ہائے ہائے
خاک میں ناموس پیمان محبت مل گئی
اٹھ گئی دنیا سے راہ و رسم یاری ہائے ہائے

It is this last group which is entitled to be called pure subjective poetry; for the poetic experience, here clothed in language, has been really felt in the mind of the poet, and is neither intellectually assumed as in the distichs of the first category, nor simply fancied as in those of the second.

There is no doubt that a comprehensive study of Ghalib's poetry involves the consideration of the distichs of every group. But our interest in him will vary with each. To the conventional group, we will have to go to appraise the art of the poet intellectually or imaginatively bodying forth assumed feelings which do not belong to the texture of his being. In the second group where feeling is handled, as a matter of luxury or intellectual playfulness, we will find more of verbal artifice than of purely subjective poetic experience.

In the final group, we find pure poetry. As is natural to every evolutionary process, not each distich of Ghalib will be found in this group to be a perfect amalgam of the inward poetic conception with the outward form. But the best of him, as a subjective poet, is to be found here only.

Those who are not accustomed to analyse conventional subjective poetry, such as that of Ghalib, into groups as suggested by us, fall very often into the error of taking lines helter-skelter from the different groups and visualizing in their minds strange pictures of their poet.

A line like

ھے پرے سرحد ادراک سے اپنا مسجود
قبلہ کو اہل نظر قبلہ نما کہتے ھیں

or

منظر اک بلندی پر اور ھم بنا سکتے
عرش سے ادھر ھوتا کاشکے مکاں اپنا

or

جز نام نہیں صورت عالم مجھے منظور
جز وھم نہیں ہستئی اشیا مرے آگے

or

اک کھیل ھے اورنگ سلیماں مرے نزدیک
اک بات ھے اعجاز مسیحا مرے آگے

will throw many an innocent mind into hysterics. They will ejaculate that here is not only philosophy but great philosophy unvisaged by any one known to the history of philosophy. But is there really much philosophy in such lines, anything new?

ہے پرے سرحد ادراک سے اپنا مسجود
قبلہ کو اہل نظر قبلہ نما کہتے ہیں

is at best a pun, for the conception is of the very ordinary sort, so ordinary that it is shared by even the illiterate idolators of the image of Vishnu or Shiva, and of the multifarious manifestations of each. Each is a symbol signifying something which its material form has been made to convey. Each inanimate image is intended to point to something animate.

منظر ایک بلندی پر اور ہم بنا سکتے
عرش سے ادھر ہوتا کاشکے مکاں اپنا

What philosophy is there in such an expression? If one from Hyderabad could find means to go to London and after reaching there perch himself on the topmost point of say St. Paul's he would certainly, if he had eyes, enjoy a bird's-eye view of the entire area where Old London once stood. But the moot point is that he must first reach London, and must be allowed to crawl up its famous cathedral. Did Ghalib ever arrive even at the threshold of the 'Arsh' in his earthly life?

جز نام نہیں صورت عالم مجھے منظور
جز وہم نہیں ہستئی اشیا مرے آگے

Is there anything new here? Confront any Indian mendicant Jogi, and even he will blurt out as a matter of parrot-like exercise nothing less sweet.

اک کھیل ھے اورنگ سلیماں مرے نزدیک
اک بات ھے اعجاز مسیحا مرے آگے

This is mere banter.

Again take a line of Sufi strain—

نہ تھا کچھ تو خدا تھا کچھ نہ ہوتا تو خدا ہوتا
ڈبویا مجھ کو ہونے نے نہ ہوتا میں تو کیا ہوتا

What else is here except verbal jugglery? A Sufi will say that none of his beliefs is embodied here. A logician will say that here is no logic.

Lines of such character can be quoted in profusion. They will merely demonstrate that Ghalib's innocent admirers have gone to him not for his poetry, but for what they have fancied his philosophy and for his mastery over words.

Until one can distinguish the conventional in Ghalib from the real, the real poet will ever remain shrouded. A conventional pose, however intellectualized, will at best be but an intellectual pose. A philosoplic idea though rendered into versified expression will always remain a philosophic idea. But if convention and philosophy have to mingle with poetic experience in order to accentuate it, they must be subject to it, and not submerge it under their weary weight.

This is but an elementary notion of poetic appreciation. But few of Ghalib's blind admirers show that they possess it. His intellectual poses on the conventional ground especially in the domain of what Hali so frequently characterizes as the poet's حکمت and خلیفہ and his dexterity of expression have fascinated them so much that they hardly stop to consider that they are dealing with a poet, and not with a philosopher or with a mere artificer of words.

Ghalib's artifice in words is admissible, although he apprenticed long to achieve mastery, as is borne out by his Diwan as chronologically arranged by the present writer.

His philosophy -- what is it, and where is this to be had? Every one as a matter of religious duty picks a number of stray lines out of the conventional group and goes on to explain the meaning of each and to read into each some stray philosophic idea. But none has so far attempted to piece the several ideas together into a system, so that one might know what exact contribution Ghalib has made to philosophy. Ghalib is to be studied primarily as a poet. He may have his own view of life or what is called philosohpy of life, which may have coloured or intensified his poetic experience. But if that is to be proved, one must go not where he assumes ingenious intellectual poses on the conventional ground, but where he strikes a persistent note of what he has felt in actual life.

In the chapter on his outlook or philosopoy of life, we have seen that the attitude which reflected the soul

and mind of Galib was born of discontent such as rendered his mind to look at the world in which he lived as something inimical, something alien to himself. The real philosophy of Ghalib is to be sought in that attitude only, the philosophy which has mingled with his poetic experience and given its poetic expression its distinctive character.

The poetic experience of a man is, as has already been pointed out, what he enjoys in his mind poetically. His enjoyment varies with his subjective limitations; for, as is the mind, so its expression. And, as we have endeavoured to show in the previous chapter, the greatest stature to which a man's mind can attain is when he finds harmony in life. Great poetry takes its birth in a mind such as this, takes its birth when the poet begins to feel that life is an expression of harmony, when his mind begins to fit "itself to the external world." Ghalib never achieved such harmony.

When a man fails to find it difficult to fit his mind to the external world, one of two things he does, if he is anxious to seek consolation and lay unction to his troubled soul and not turn a lunatic. Either he violently falls or creeps into the lap of some one who excites and reciprocates his love, and feels that beyond his beloved there is nothing that should interest him; or failing this, he turns his back upon everything and lives an intellectual life of his own where he lets reign a harmony such as appeals to his fancy.

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain,
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and fight
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

This is the way of consolation with some. They forget their life's misery in the presence of love. It is their anodyne.

Ghalib never enjoyed such consolation. He, in his young days, did care for a woman—a public courtesan. She died before he had realised it was love, and he wrote a rather touching elegy in the form of a ghazal. This tragedy happened to him at a time when he had at home a truly wedded wife, married not many years before.

درد سے میرے ہے تجھ کو بے قراری ہائے ہائے
کیا ہوی ظالم تیری غفلت شعاری ہائے ہائے

تیرے دل میں گر نہ تھا آشوب غم کا حوصلہ
تو نے پھر کیوں کی تھی میری غم گساری ہائے ہائے

کیوں مری غم خواری کا تجھ کو آیا تھا خیال
دشمنی اپنی تھی میری دوستداری ہائے ہائے

عمر بھر کا تو نے پیمان وفا باندھا تو کیا ؟
عمر کو بھی تو نہیں ہے پائداری ہائے ہائے

زھر لگتی ھے مجھے آب ھوائے زندگی
یعنی تجھ سے تھی اسے ناسازگاری ہائے ہائے

گلفشانی ہائے ناز جلوہ کو کیا ھو گیا
خاک پر ھوتی ھے تیری لالہ کاری ہائے ہائے

شرم رسوائی سے جا چھپنا نقاب خاک میں
ختم ھے الفت کی تجھ پر پردہ داری ہائے ہائے

خاک میں ناموس پیمان محبت مل گئی
اُٹھ گئی دنیا سے راہ و رسم یاری ہائے ہائے

ہاتھ ہی تیغ آزما کا کام سے جاتا رہا
دل پہ اک لگنے نہ پایا زخم کاری ہائے ہائے

کس طرح کاٹے کوئی شب ہائے تار برشکال
ھے نظر خو کردہ اختر شماری ہائے ہائے

گوش مہجور پیام و چشم محروم جمال
ایک دل تس پر یہ ناامیدواری ہائے ہائے

عشق نے پکڑا نہ تھا غالب ابھی الفت کا رنگ
رہ گیا تھا دل میں جو کچھ ذوق خواری ہائے ہائے

Years after this he wrote

کلکتے کا جو ذکر کیا تو نے ہمنشیں
ایک تیر میرے سینے میں مارا کہ ھائے ھائے

وہ سبزہ زار ہائے مطرا کہ ھے غضب
وہ نازنیں بتان خود آرا کہ ھائے ھائے

صبر آزما وہ اُن کی نگاہیں کہ حف نظر
طاقت ربا وہ اُن کا اشارا کہ ھائے ھائے

which smacks of something like heart's affection which

evidently happened to him when he visited Calcutta in his fortieth year.

Between his early tragedy and his wistful regrets recollective of his movements in Calcutta, Ghalib does not seem to have remained inactive. His ghazal begining

مدت ہوئی ہے یار کو مہماں کیئے ہوئے
جوش قدح سے بزم چراغاں کیئے ہوئے

and written several years before his visit to Calcutta, unless it is s a mere intellectual exercise, is not devoid of meaning.

What happened to him after his visit to Calcutta cannot be stated with any certainty. He might have exercised his capacity for love in a sliding scale as years rolled over him. But there is no specific historical proof of such a physical retrogressive affection. He did write poetry after that dealing with love. In fact just a few years before his death, when he was about sixty he did write.

شب وصال میں مونس گیا ہے بن تکیہ
ہوا ہے موجب آرام جان و تن تکیہ
بنا ہے تختہ گلہائے یاسمیں بستر
ہوا ہے دستۂ نسرین و نسترن تکیہ
فروغ حسن سے روشن ہے خوابگاہ تمام
جو رخت خواب ہے پرویں تو ہے پرن تکیہ
مزا ملے کہو کیا خاک ساتھ سونے کا
رکھے جو بیچ میں وہ شوخ سیم تن تکیہ
اگرچہ تھا یہ ارادہ مگر خدا کا شکر
اٹھا سکا نہ نزاکت سے گلبدن تکیہ

If these lines were written in old age when Ghalib could hardly move out of his bed, they certainly should not suggest real, living, and lively physical love for a damsel. They must be certainly intellectual exercises, in spite of the interesting theory that a local writer suggested in the journal *Urdu* of Awrangabad that Ghalib began in his youth as a philosopher prating wisdom and things beyond the human ken, and ended in the decreptitude of old age as a lover intent on discarding the pillow between his emaciated bones and his sweetheart.

Whatever the truth, whatever the character of love Ghalib felt or fancied in his actual life, the picture of the beloved that he ever conjures up before his mind's eye in his ghazals is that of the conventional sweetheart, the unspeakable public courtesan.

بغل میں غیر کی آج آپ سوتے ہیں کہیں ورنہ
سبب کیا خواب میں آکر تبسم ہائے پنہاں کا

شب کو کسی کے خواب میں آیا ہے وہ کہیں
دکھتے ہیں آج اس بت سیمیں بدن کے پاوں

نیند اسکی ہے دماغ اس کا ہے راتیں اسکی ہیں
جسکے بازو پر تری زلفیں پریشاں ہوگئیں

میںنے کہا کہ بزم ناز چاہئے غیر سے تہی
سنکے ستم ظریف نے مجھکو اٹھا دیا کہ یوں

یہی ہے آزمانا تو ستانا کس کو کہتے ہیں
عدو کے ہولئے جب تم تو میرا امتحاں کیوں ہو

کہا تم نے کہ کیوں ہو غیر کے ملنے میں رسوائی
بجا کہتے ہو سچ کہتے ہو پھر کہیو کہ ہاں کیوں ہو

غیر پھرتا ہے لئے یوں ترے خط کو کہ اگر
کوئی پوچھے کہ یہ کیا ہے تو چھپائے نہ بنے

[illegible]
[illegible]

عاشق ہوئے ہیں آپ بھی ایک اور شخص پر
آخر ستم کی کچھ تو مکافات چاہئے

کیا خوب! تم نے غیر کو بوسہ نہیں دیا
بس چپ رہو ہمارے بھی منہ میں زبان ہے

غیر لیں محفل میں بوسے جام کے
ہم رہیں یوں تشنہ لب پیغام کے

This, to give a rough idea, seems to us, unless evidence is forthcoming to the contrary the conception of love that characterized Ghalib both in his intellectual perambulations as well as in his actual physical dealings. His love evidently is all sensuous: there is no spirituality in it. Of love such as sustains life in moments of depression, of love which lets one forget life's travails, there is hardly any trace in the entire Diwan of Ghalib.

Those who are not favoured with life-sustaining love go their own way, apparently unconcerned with the realities of this unintelligible world, and try to wander inwardly in a world of their own and create for their intellectual comfort, a *Prometheus Unbound*, a *Dynasts*

and like creations. There, in their several worlds, they find the harmony which they so sorely miss in the midst of mankind.

Poetry which embodies such refugitive attitude is called the poetry of refuge. Such poetry has little to do with the life of man as is ordinarily lived from day to day, and as such is not reared on the universal. Beautiful as the conception that it may embody, strong and powerful as may be its appeal to the mind that is out of its moorings, one nevertheless knows that it is merely a figment, a creation of the imagination, and therefore cannot bring consolation to those who live in the throes of realities. It may please us while we read or hear it. But it hardly dispels our doubts or distractions. It does not fit our minds to the external world. It does not let us enjoy the things of life in their proper perspective. That is why we are accustomed to regard the poetry which interprets life or the Poetry of Interpretation as it is called, greater in quality than the Poetry of Refuge. Here, in the Poetry of Interpretation, there is no running away from life, no sense of being cruelly submerged by it either. Here are pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow, and the rest of the things which enter into our life. They come into our life as a matter of course, but they are made intelligible to us by the inward power of harmony that interpretation implies. The poet lays bare their significances. The greater the range and variety of his experiences, all compacted into one inclusive experience, the greater the harmony of their total significance. And the greater

the form such significance takes for its expression and greater the sense of final unity that it creates or achieves, the greater the poetry it gives.

Ghalib never achieved greatness such as this. For this, he is to blame himself. Greatness was born in him, but he suppressed it by his wilfulness and his narrow outlook on life. His discontent is itself an expression of his inability to understand the world, inability to read into the life of things, inability to comprehend all that is lovely in life, in God's creation. In a world such as he lived in—cooped up within its narrow walls, darting out his attention only to those who ministered to his material wants, remembering nobody else, and growing spiritually wise only in lucid intervals—in a world such as this, there could be little of poetry born of divine light, less of that which is divinely great. Harmony of the spirit does not exist in Ghalib.

Even if he had achieved the harmony we are speaking of, it would have been impossible for him to express through the tiny form of the ghazal the whole gamut of a great poet's great experience, with its wide range and variety and compacted significance.

It might not have mattered much if he had not felt this sense of harmony. If only he had the necessary faith in himself to beat out an honest retreat and take refuge in an ideal world of his own, he could still have achieved greatness, though not of the very highest quality. But the utmost that he could conceive of in this direction is this:

رہئے اب ایسی جگہ چل کر جہاں کوئی نہ ہو
ہم سخن کوئی نہ ہو اور ہم زباں کوئی نہ ہو
بے در و دیوار سا اک گھر بنایا چاہئے
کوئی ہمسایہ نہ ہو اور پاسباں کوئی نہ ہو
پڑئے گر بیمار تو کوئی نہ ہو تیماردار
اور اگر مر جاے تو نوحہ خواں کوئی نہ ہو

This is a madman's paradise.

So then, what is the picture that rises before our mind's eye? Of Ghalib as an artificer of words, we may say he stands at a high station among Urdu ghazal writers, although as we have said before, he apprenticed long to achieve mastery. His mastery is more noticeable in his prose, his letters, which are the outcome of maturity. For this, one may indeed regard him as one of the founders of modern Urdu prose. But as a poet, he deceived himself. In his poetic utterance, there is neither love which lets life live, nor harmony born of realities, nor harmony born of the sense of refuge. In his eagerness to shine as a new star, he forgot his true avocation. He let the light, the Divine light, which must have been vouchsafed to him as a poet, slip out of his control. The light, in spite of him, seems to have struggled hard benevolently to adhere to him, for there are indications in his Urdu verse that he enjoyed now and then great moments.

سب کہاں کچھ لالہ و گل میں نمایاں ہو گئیں
خاک میں کیا صورتیں ہوں گی کہ پنہاں ہو گئیں

قفس میں مجھ سے روداد چمن کہتے نہ ڈر ہمدم

گری ہے جس پہ کل بجلی وہ میرا آشیاں کیوں ہو

دام ہر موج میں ہے حلقۂ صد کام نہنگ

دیکھیں کیا گزرے ہے قطرہ پہ گہر ہونے تک

آگے آتی تھی حال دل پہ ہنسی

اب کسی بات پر نہیں آتی

کہہ سکے کون کہ یہ جلوہ گری کس کی ہے

پردہ چھوڑا ہے کچھ ایسا کہ اٹھائے نہ بنے

لرزتا ہے مرا دل زحمت مہر درخشاں پر

میں ہوں وہ قطرۂ شبنم جو ہو خار بیاباں پر

رنج سے خوگر ہوا انسان تو مٹ جاتا ہے رنج

مشکلیں اتنی پڑیں مجھ پر کہ آسان ہوگئیں

ہیں آج کیوں ذلیل کہ کل تک نہ تھی پسند

گستاخیٔ فرشتہ ہماری جناب میں

چلتا ہوں تھوڑی دور ہر ایک راہ رو کے ساتھ

پہچانتا نہیں ہوں ابھی راہبر کو میں

رات دن گردش میں ہیں سات آسماں

ہو رہیگا کچھ نہ کچھ گھبرائیں کیا

لاگ ہو تو اس کو ہم سمجھیں لگاؤ

جب نہ ہو کچھ بھی تو دھوکا کھائیں کیا

نہ گل نغمہ ہوں نہ پردۂ ساز
میں ہوں اپنی شکست کی آواز

But such moments were never worked into a great poem and their great accents never interfused into a great song, for he never felt the sense of harmony that a great poet needs, nor developed a great outlook which moulds a great, poetic experience into a great poem.

This is the story of our poet. He lived a distracted life under the shadow of a distracted outlook, and has left to us poetry out of harmony with itself. He cannot be numbered among the great.

APPENDIX I

In connection with the chronological arrangement of the Urdu Diwan of Ghalib, the following letter was very kindly addressed on my behalf in October last by Sir Mohammad Akbar N. A. Hydari, Finance Minister, His Exalted Highness the Nizam's Government, to Dr. Wali Muhammad, Secretary to the Durbar of Bhopal:

"Dear Mr. Wali Mohomed,

Dr. Syed Abdul Latif, Professor of English at the Osmania University, is writing a monograph on Ghalib. In the interests of his study, he is anxious to know what lines and poems are noted on the *margin* of the MS. of Ghalib's Diwan, dated 1237 A. H., which is preserved in the Hamidiya Library of Bhopal.

I send you enclosed herewith a copy of the consolidated edition of the poet's Diwan issued from the Mufid-i-'Am Steam Press of Agra, known as *Nuskha-i-Hamidiyya*. It will serve the purpose of Dr. Latif if you will have kindly marked therein those lines and poems of the consolidated edition which have been reproduced from the margin of the MS.

Dr. Latif would like to have the full names of the persons who compare the MS. with the consolidated Diwan and mark the lines and poems concerned.

As the monograph is completed and as Dr. Latif wishes to clear one or two points before he sends it to the press, I shall be much obliged if you will kindly

arrange to have the enclosed copy of the Diwan returned as soon as possible, say, within a week from its receipt. I trust I am not asking you too much.

Yours sincerely,
(Sd.) A. HYDARI"

A similar letter was addressed to Mr. Nizami of Badayun, U. P., who gave out in the second edition of the Diwan issued from the Nizami Press, Badayun, that a MS. copy of the Diwan as compiled by Ghalib in 1248 A. H. was with him while the said edition was under preparation. He was requested to show on the margin of *Nuskha-i-Hamidiyya* what lines and ghazals were common to the MS. in question. While Dr. Wali Muhammad of Bhopal sent the original MS. itself down to Hyderabad for full and personal consultation by me, Mr. Nizami Badayuni wrote a letter in reply to Sir Muhammad N. A. Hydari, which rendered into English runs as follows:

"I feel ashamed to say that I have not been able to carry out your behest and that I have to return the volume intact. The fact is that the MS. Diwan transcribed about 1248 A. H. which I had access to in 1918 and about which I made mention in the preface to the second edition (Nizami Press, Badayun) was not with me at the time but was made available to me at Rampur through a friend of mine, the late Munshi Ahmad Ali Sahib Shawq, and which I consultd at the time. When I wrote to you on the 7th November stating that it would take time to do the work, I thought and even strongly

hoped that I could obtain the copy at Rampur and thereby carry out your behest. Indeed, I went to Rampur on the 17th* November and stayed there till the 20th. During this period I made every possible effort to obtain the MS. but in vain. The MS. is not to be found in the Rampur library. Of course, there is a copy there transcribed in 1855 A.D. (1271 A.H.). I thought that Munshi Ahmad Ali Sahib Shawq who had connections with the State Library at Rampur had given me the MS. of 1248 A.H. from the said Library. But the copy was not there. Now the Munshi Sahib is dead. Therefore I am helpless in obtaining it. It seems to me that the MS. which he gave me was either his own personal property or belonged to a friend of his."

When the *Nuskha-i-Hamidiyya* was received back here from Badayun, it was found hat various distichs, and in some places even hemistichs, were boldly marked or underlined with red pencil. This marking is not noticeable beyond Radif Alif. Who made these marks is not known. But the marking by whomsoever made in the absence of the MS. of 1248 A. H. is inspiration, for it substantiates and endorses in many places my chronological classification of the ghazals of Ghalib in respect of Radif Alif. The students of Ghalib may well track the MS. in the light of the information furnished here, for its recovery may help the solution of many a problem relating to the study of Ghalib.

S. A. L.

APPENDIX II

The following is a translation of the extract from the statement of Ghalib referred to in the Footnote on P. 58 :---

" He (Ghalib) is greatly respected by Government. Instead of gold coins he offers only laudatory odes, and he gets seven parcha (پارچہ), Chaigha (چیغہ), sarpaich (سرپیچ) and a pearl necklace. Recently he was invited to the darbar at Lahore held by the Commissioner...... .... along with other noblemen, but the man owing to his indigent circumstances could not proceed there. He was telling me (the biographer) that although a man of seventy years, deaf and always ill, he would not have, if he had money, minded his ailment but proceeded straight on to the darbar of the Lord Saheb. He therefore takes with him to the grave this 'scar of wistfulness'. Not to speak out the truth is infidelity towards God and injustice. This man submitted in the year 1855 through the Ex-Governor, Lord Ellenborough, an ode addressed to Her Majesty the Queen, and at the beginning of 1856 he received three letters direct and not under care of the Government of India. We will now deal with these three letters and close the subject."

The following is a translation of the editorial comments on the above that appeared in the " Urdu " of Awrangabad :---

" When the earliest Diwan of Ghalib was discovered in the State*Library of Bhopal, the " Anjuman-i-Taraqqi-i-Urdu" entrusted the work of editing, etc., to the late Dr. Abdul Rahman Bijnawri. As an aid to him, much new and unique material (about Ghalib) was furnished to him, among which there was a very strange and curious "thing" written by Ghalib himself detailing, at the instance of a professional biographer, the facts of his life. This folio "from somewhere" reached the hands of the late Iftekhar Alam who as a mark of kindness transferred it to the late Bijnawri. Although the facts are given as if written by a third person, the style reveals the hand of Ghalib. Apart from this, one or two things there are in this folio which are so intimately private that could never have been stated by any other person. I have in my possession several of his letters. A comparison of them (with the folio concerned) grandiloquently demonstrates a fascinating similarity in respect of the alphabet (ع)

A perusal of these facts makes at least one thing certain, although there are indications of it here and there in his letters ; and that is a distinct contradiction in the words of the Mirza Saheb himself of the so-called spirit of nationalism or patriotism attributed to him ' in the light of modern criticism ' by a certain person."

* The reference is to Dr. S. Mahmud of Patna.

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